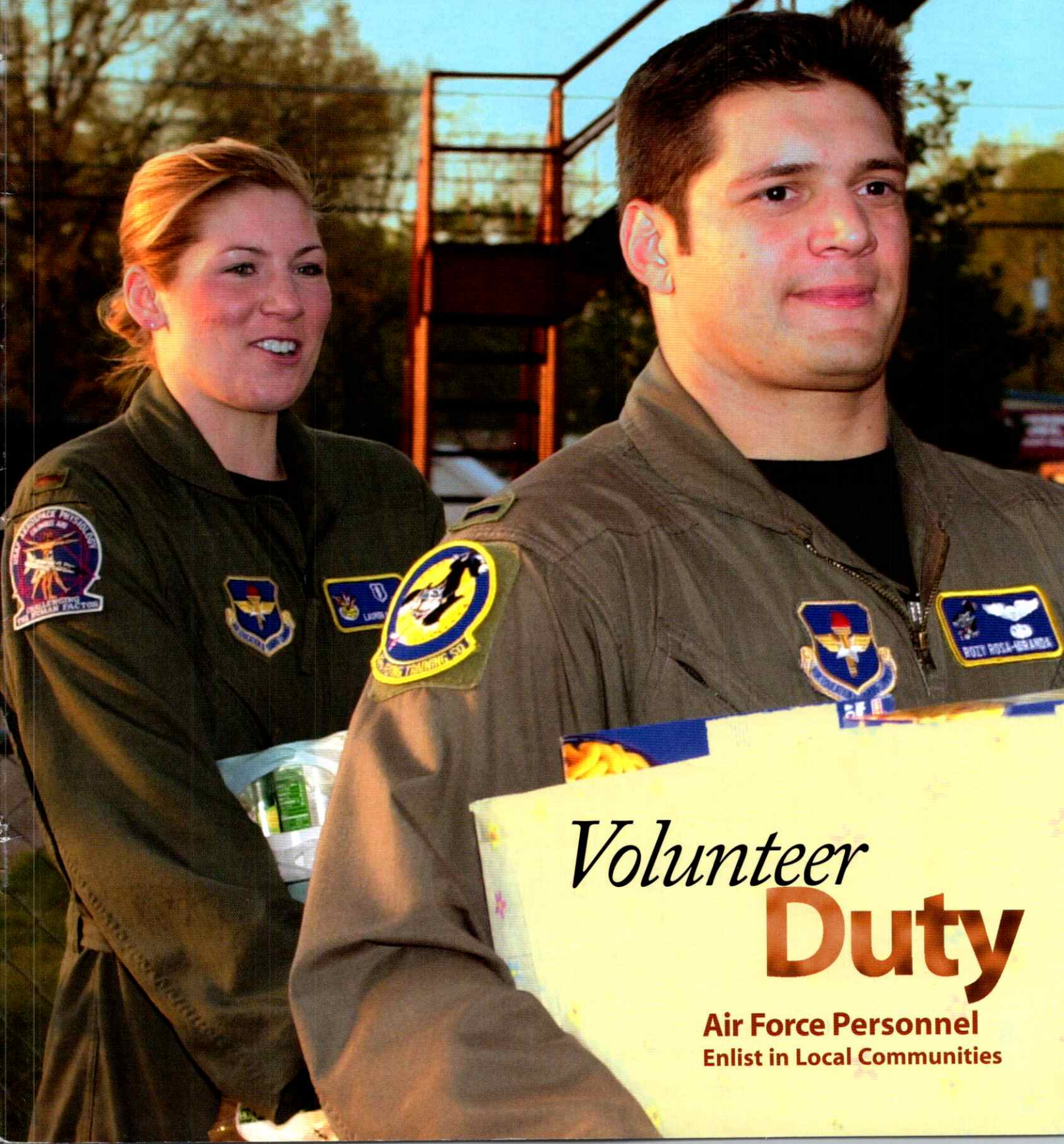




VOLUNTEER Winter 2003

LEADERSHIP



Volunteer
Duty

**Air Force Personnel
Enlist in Local Communities**

VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP

Published by
The Points of Light
Foundation

STEVEN L. MILLER
*Chairman
Board of Directors*

ROBERT K. GOODWIN
*President and
Chief Executive Officer*

RICHARD C. MOCK
*Vice President
Recognition and
Board Relations*

JANE HARVEY
Managing Editor

BRENDA HANLON
Production Manager

Volunteer Leadership is copyrighted © by the Points of Light Foundation. All rights reserved. Contents may not be reproduced in any manner, in whole or in part, without permission from the editor. Contents are not official statements of The Points of Light Foundation policy unless so identified. *Volunteer Leadership* is published quarterly by the Points of Light Foundation. Bulk postage paid at Washington, D.C. Subscriptions: \$30 one year; \$58 two years; \$82 three years. Outside U.S.: Canada add \$2; foreign add \$4. Change of address and other subscription-related matters: Write to CIRCULATION, Volunteer Leadership, 1400 I Street, NW, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20005. When sending change of address, send both old and new addresses, including zip code; allow at least six weeks for change to take effect. All other correspondence should be directed to: Editor, Volunteer Leadership, Points of Light Foundation, 1400 I Street, NW, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20005. Phone: 202-729-8000; e-mail: jharvey1@cox.net.

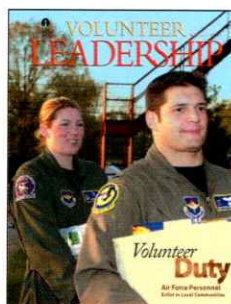


POINTS
OF LIGHT
FOUNDATION
&
VOLUNTEER CENTER
NATIONAL NETWORK

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

Contents

cover story



4 Volunteer Duty

By Sarah J. Schmidt

Communities discover that local military bases offer an exceptionally talented and energetic pool of volunteers.

Cover photo: First Lt. Lauren Maher, left, and First Lt. Rosa Miranda of Columbus Air Force Base deliver food to the Mark Mitchell Shelter for Abused and Neglected Children.

Photo courtesy of Columbus AFB

departments

15 Recognition

20 Shoptalk

30 Briefly Noted

32 Calendar

9 workshop

Conflict Resolution

10 Willingness to Change

11 Expectations

12 Internal Disagreements

13 Painful Truth

14 Contentious Clients

16 Interfaith Outreach

By Kathleen F. Phalen

Individuals and organizations embrace religious tolerance as a way to help heal the wounds of Sept. 11.

19 Point of View

Utah Lt. Gov. Olene Walker on being "steeped in service."

22 Growing Volunteers

By Roy DeLaMar

Americans volunteer eagerly in response to disaster and for special events like the Olympics, but turning one-timers into long-term volunteers is another matter.

26 Hiring Consultants

By Judith G. Lindenberg

If your organization has not hired a consultant, chances are it will at some point. We offer suggestions on how to hire and work effectively with consultants.



Introducing ...

"For Members Only" is a new section within *Volunteer Leadership* that will showcase members' accomplishments and provide useful information to Points of Light Foundation members. It is part of our ongoing effort to develop and share resources that help volunteer managers build, create, sustain and enhance effective volunteer programs.

The Foundation has four membership categories that provide benefits tailored to meet the specific needs and priorities of more than 1,500 volunteer leaders.

■ **Businesses**—comprising an outstanding group of talented community service professionals representing a wide variety of organizations across the U.S. and throughout the world.

■ **Corporate Volunteer Councils**—comprising Business Members and Volunteer Center liaisons.

■ **Nonprofit/Government Agencies**—representing volunteer programs in human services, health care agencies, local, state and federal government agencies, communities of faith, schools and universities, grassroots groups, other 501(c)(3) organizations.

■ **Volunteer Centers**—representing thousands of individuals in more than 450 communities and in 50 states. Volunteer Centers mobilize people and resources to deliver creative solutions to community problems, by serving as catalysts for social action and as key local resources for volunteer involvement.

Interested in becoming a member of the Foundation? Visit our Web site at www.pointsoflight.org or call 202-729-8118 for further information.

Already a member? Don't forget to visit your respective members-only site also at www.pointsoflight.org.



Readership Survey

As any publisher knows, it's important to understand what your readers need, what they've come to expect and what they would like to see in the future. Because you're a subscriber to *Volunteer Leadership*, we value your input and suggestions.

Therefore, we've developed a survey that will be available on-line for our subscribers the week of January 27, 2003. You will be notified when it is available and provide instructions for completion and submission of this very important document.

Thank you!



Let Us Hear from You

If you are interested in showcasing an outstanding achievement by your organization or would like to share an award won by a colleague, please contact Deborah Timmons, director, Membership Services, at dtimmons@pointsoflight.org for submission guidelines.

We'd like to know how we can use this section to fulfill your membership needs. Let us have your ideas for future "For Members Only" columns. Send suggestions to: dtimmons@pointsoflight.org

We hope you will find this new section enjoyable and beneficial. Plan now to participate by showcasing your organization's outstanding achievements in an upcoming issue.

Coming in April: Corporations and the Principles of Excellence. ♦



**POINTS
OF LIGHT
FOUNDATION**
&
VOLUNTEER CENTER
NATIONAL NETWORK

Board of Directors

Steven L. Miller

Chairman
Retired Chairman, President and CEO
Shell Oil Company

Xavier Benavides

National Outreach Coordinator
OxFam America

Dr. Norman Brown

President
Norm Brown Associates

Marcia Bullard

President, CEO and Editor
USA Weekend

Former President George Bush

Honorary Chairman

Neil Bush

Chairman
Ignite!, Inc.

Dr. William T. Butler

Chancellor
Baylor College of Medicine

Andrew H. Card, Jr.

Chief of Staff to the President
Washington, D.C.

Honorary Member Mary Conway

President
Sears, Roebuck and Co. Full-Line Stores

Dr. Stephen Covey

Honorary Member
Covey Leadership Center

Michelle Engler

First Lady, State of Michigan
Commissioner, Michigan Community Service Commission

James R. Gadd

CEO
Telephone Pioneers of America
Chair, Connect America Partners Council

Edward L. Gardner

President
Industrial Solvents Corporation

Robert K. Goodwin

President and CEO
The Points of Light Foundation

Adele Hall

Vice Chair

Marian L. Heard

President and CEO
United Way of Massachusetts Bay

Frances Hesselbein

Chairman, Board of Governors
Peter F. Drucker Foundation for Nonprofit Management

Arianna Huffington

Syndicated Columnist

Honorable James A. Joseph

Professor, Terry Sanford Institute
Duke University

Molly Keeney

Executive Director
Volunteer Center of Greensboro (N.C.)
Chair, Volunteer Center National Network Council

Janice Kreamer

President
Greater Kansas City Community Foundation

Leslie Lenkowsky

CEO
Corporation for National and Community Service
Honorary

Sara Melendez

President and CEO
Independent Sector

Bernard J. Milano, CPA

President and Trustee
KPMG Foundation

J. Richard Munro

Chairman
Genentech, Inc.

Polly O'Brien

Director, Community Affairs
Pitney Bowes

Chair, National Council on Workplace Volunteerism

Mitt Romney

Vice Chair
Governor
State of Massachusetts

Sam Singh

President and CEO
Michigan Nonprofit Association

Dr. C. DeLores Tucker

Convening Founder
National Political Congress of Black Women, Inc.

Terry Williams

Vice Chair
Retired Senior Director
McKinsey & Company Inc.

Harris Wofford

Retired CEO
Corporation for National Service

Charles Berry

Secretary
Shaw Pittman

cover story

Air Force Personnel
Enlist in Local Communities

Volunteer

By Sarah J. Schmidt

Duty



Military personnel assigned to Columbus (Miss.) Air Force Base participate in a variety of volunteer projects including home building for Habitat for Humanity and food collection and delivery for local charities.



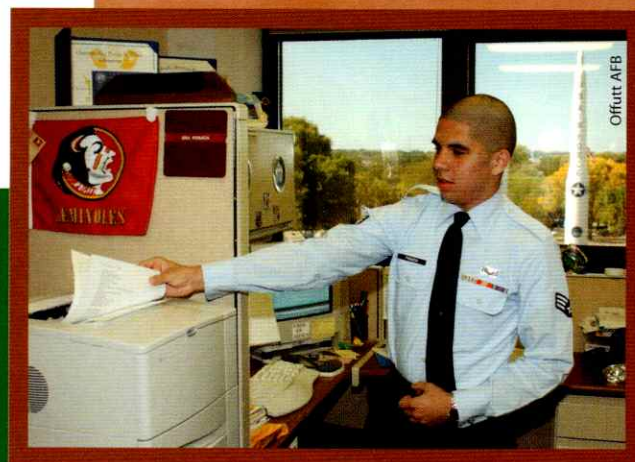
Ruben Gonzalez strikes an imposing figure in camouflage uniform and combat boots. With 17 years active duty in the United States Air Force, this career master sergeant handles firearms with ease, dons chemical warfare gear without hesitation, and knows the names of hostile places that aren't even on the map. He also builds playgrounds, judges science fairs, organizes toy drives and sits on the board of a scholarship pageant.

Unusual? Not at all, says Gonzalez, whose volunteer activities add diversity to his military life. "As a military citizen, we normally get involved on and off base," Gonzalez says. "The Air Force develops the whole person, so what we do in our jobs matters, but what we do in our communities matters too." In his current assignment at Randolph Air Force Base, Gonzalez volunteers at the Red Cross, United Way, Fiesta Scholarship Pageant and local elementary schools. ➡



FIND
A BASE
NEAR
YOU

www.military.com/InstallationGuides/ChooseInstallation



Senior Airman Greg Posada first learned about volunteer opportunities through the base chapel at Offutt AFB, Neb. Wherever he's assigned, Posada says, "There's always somebody who needs help. That's why I try to pitch in."



Jackie Mercer-Hollie and Master Sergeant Ruben Gonzalez visit hospitals as part of their volunteer service as Randolph AFB Volunteer Ambassadors.

Talent & Energy

Hundreds of Air Force members like Gonzalez volunteer each year, says Sandra Nichols, volunteer resource manager at Randolph Air Force Base in San Antonio. Military bases offer an exceptionally talented and energetic pool of volunteers. "People look to the military as security," Nichols explains, "so volunteer-based organiza-

tions tend to welcome military members." Last year, more than 1,500 active duty personnel from Randolph volunteered in San Antonio and surrounding communities, logging more than 225,000 work hours.

Those numbers represent extraordinary levels of volunteerism occurring at virtually all military installations, says Joyce Seibel, at the Air Force Headquarters Personnel Center. In fact, volunteerism has become such an important professional outlet for Air Force personnel that new guidelines, scheduled for publication next year, give greater focus to active duty volunteer endeavors, she says.

Master Sergeant Ivory Baker,

Tips for Recruiting Military Volunteers

Military personnel make great volunteers, but working through the maze of government bureaucracy to find and maintain good contacts can be daunting. Here are tips for easy recruiting:

★ **Start at the top** — The first place to call at any military installation is the Public Affairs Office. If there's not one, then call the commander's office and ask for the person assigned to handle public affairs. He or she should be able to connect you with the person who coordinates all the base volunteer efforts. Ask how that installation handles requests for volunteers. Some may want written requests; others may accept a phone call.

★ **Don't overlook military families** — Most military bases host a facility called the Family Support Center (or some similar title), which employs at least one volunteer resource manager. This person coordinates volunteer opportunities for all the military personnel and their families assigned to that base and will be your best contact for recruiting volunteers on a regular basis. Contact the installation's main switchboard for phone numbers.

★ **Getting the word out** — Once you've established the right contact, communicate your volunteer opportunities well in advance of anticipated needs. Two to three weeks seems reasonable; earlier if you need many volunteers. If you rely on military volunteers for annual events, ask the volunteer resource manager to check the base calendar for conflicts before you schedule the event each year.

★ **Geographic limitations** — Charitable organizations that operate within driving distance of military installations stand the best chance of recruiting volunteers from among the personnel assigned there. There's no geographic limitation, per se, but volunteer coordinators at the installations interviewed said they had the best response to projects that were no further than 30 to 50 miles from the installation. If you're not that close, don't be deterred from making contact, but be prepared to address the distance issue with plans for car pools, flexible hours or other accommodations.

★ **Establish a partnership** — Work toward developing long-term relationships with your contacts at the military installation. Meet with commanders, add military contacts to your mailing list and include a military representative or liaison among your advisors. Promote your charitable mission by including brochures or other "freebies" in newcomer's packets that the base sends to incoming personnel. Ask if the installation gives a newcomer's orientation, and if so, offer to speak on behalf of your organization. You may not recruit instant volunteers among the newcomers, but your efforts will help form a partnership that will produce lasting rewards for your organization and the military community.

— Sarah J. Schmidt

executive to the Command Chaplain at U.S. Strategic Command, credits a lot of it to geography. "Because military personnel move to new assignments every few years, they're not locked into a geographic mind set," he explains. "A lot of us have deployed to places like Haiti and Cuba where we've seen really bad conditions. It's made us more sensitive to what we have at home, and it's motivated us to help build better communities where we can."

Team Builder

Besides building better communities, volunteering also builds teamwork, which translates into better job performance, says Technical Sergeant

Stephen Bachant of Columbus Air Force Base, Miss. Bachant coordinates an all-military building project through the local Habitat for Humanity. He first worked with Habitat last year when he volunteered with some military buddies. This year, they decided to take on an entire house.

The project is being built completely with volunteer labor from military members at Columbus Air Force Base. USAA sponsored the project with \$35,000. Bachant organizes about 12 workers on Saturdays from August to February, when the house is scheduled for completion. Every squadron on base commits to work: Security Forces takes one

Saturday; the Med Group gets a Saturday; the Comm Squadron gets the next Saturday, and so on.

One weekend, volunteers from the Airmen Leadership School were assigned to work. They were mostly young airmen, many serving their first assignment. They all showed up precisely on time and worked so hard that they finished by 10:30 that morning. Their supervisor rushed to pick up more building materials just to keep them busy until lunch, laughs Bachant.

It's that kind of work ethic and genuine dedication that makes military volunteers so attractive to community organizations. "People in the military have been instilled



Left, volunteers from Randolph AFB work on the foundation for a Habitat for Humanity house in San Antonio. Right, Capt. James Taylor of U.S. Strategic Command greets athletes at the Nebraska Special Olympics.

with the goal of leaving a place better than they found it. Building a Habitat house is one great way to do that," Bachant believes. "What our effort says is that this Air Force base cares about the community just as much as it cares about our own military families," Bachant says.

Mobile Volunteers

Jackie Hager, executive director of the Columbus Habitat for Humanity, thinks the military volunteers are great promoters. "Many come here already familiar with Habitat, and they carry that knowledge and experience on to their next assignment. They're taking the mission of Habitat with them and helping other people every time they move," she explains.

Where some organizations might shy away from volunteers who frequently move or deploy for months at a time, Hager says it's been a plus for Habitat. "We don't worry about overworking our military volunteers because there's always a steady turnover," she says. "That's one of the great things about military volunteers. Every time somebody

gets reassigned or deploys, someone else just steps in."

Marv Bush, director of training for Special Olympics Nebraska, agrees. His organization relies on nearly 500 volunteers from U.S. Strategic Command and Offutt Air Force Base every year. "The last few years, there was a military exercise going on that conflicted with our games, so we lost some of our regular volunteers. But those who were here just picked up double duty and everything ran smoothly," he says.

Other organizations find ways to accommodate military schedules. Big Brothers/Big Sisters in San Antonio depends on nearly 100 Air Force members from nearby bases to mentor children. When any of those mentors deploy, they stay in touch with their Little Brother/Sister with postcards and e-mail, says Denise Pruett, a BBBSA vice president. "It's a great learning experience for the Little Brothers and Sisters because they get to learn about the country or locale where their mentor is serving," she says.

Senior Airman Allison Martin is one of those mentors. She's matched with a 10-year-old girl, whose mother

is a Reservist. "After Sept. 11, her mom was called up to active duty, so I felt an even greater sense of responsibility for mentoring during her mom's absence," Martin recalls.

Why Volunteer?

Despite the demands of military duties, the men and women of our nation's fighting forces also make up a critical component of our volunteer forces. Finding the time or the motivation to volunteer isn't an issue. "When you see what other people are going through, it makes you grateful for what you have. It's just a great feeling to help someone, no matter where you are," says Senior Airman Greg Posada of U.S. Strategic Command. The same feeling probably motivated these outstanding citizens to join the military in the first place—and will continue into many volunteer missions yet to come. ♦

Attorney Sarah J. Schmidt is the editor of a monthly legal newsletter, the Nonprofit Alert, published by the Virginia law firm of Gammon & Grange, P.C. She is a frequent contributor to Volunteer Leadership.

W rkshop

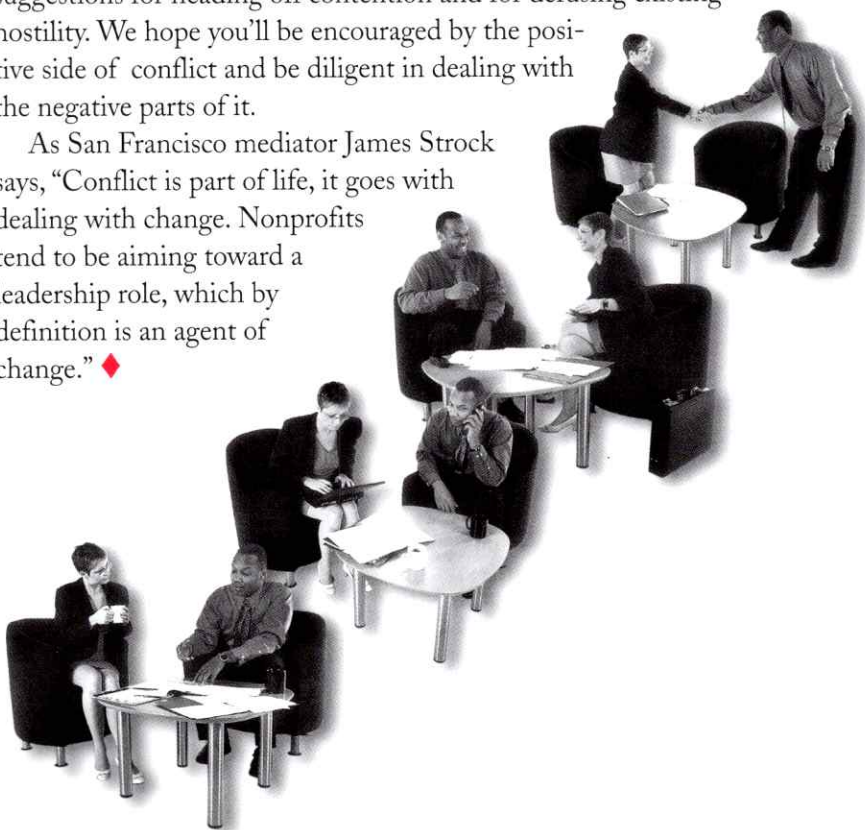
Conflict Resolution

Conflict is good: true or false? The more accurate answer is both. Author Rick Mauer sees conflict as a positive change agent: "Without conflict, everybody would be saying the same thing all the time. Conflict allows you to have different points of view that allow somebody to see for instance, our membership is changing."

Lynn Shafitic-Averill saw how corrosive conflict can become, based on her experience as executive director of a small nonprofit: "I realized my work environment had gone from one where we got things done with a lot of argument to now one that had just ground to a halt. Instead of resolving the issue of who was in charge of the agency, we became a group of women in a room having a catfight. ... So I quit."

Good or bad, conflict seems inevitable. In the following workshop articles, writer Patty Rhule explores ways to deal with conflict in various situations. Interviewing a number of experts on conflict resolution, she offers suggestions for heading off contention and for defusing existing hostility. We hope you'll be encouraged by the positive side of conflict and be diligent in dealing with the negative parts of it.

As San Francisco mediator James Strock says, "Conflict is part of life, it goes with dealing with change. Nonprofits tend to be aiming toward a leadership role, which by definition is an agent of change." ♦



Resources

- Association for Conflict Resolution is a professional organization dedicated to enhancing the practice and public understanding of conflict resolution; 1527 New Hampshire Ave., NW; Washington, D.C. 20036; Information: 202-667-9700, fax: 202-265-1968; acr@acresolution.org; www.acresolution.org

- Center for Conflict Resolution at Salisbury University provides free mediation services to the local community and teaches and trains citizens about collaborative problem solving. The Center, part of the Sociology Department, offers a degree in Conflict Analysis and Dispute Resolution (CADR). Information: 1100 Camden Ave., Salisbury MD, 21801; 410-219-2873, fax: 410-219-2979; e-mail: conflict-resolution@salisbury.edu; www.conflict-resolution.org

- Conflict Resolution, Research and Resource Institute (CRI) conducts research, education, training, process coaching, direct intervention, and program evaluation services in conflict resolution theory and techniques for individuals and groups in community, national and international arenas. Information: 615 Commerce St., Suite 100, Tacoma, WA 98402; 253-597-8100; fax: 253-597-8103; e-mail: resolution@qwest.net; www.cri.cc/

- Search for "conflict resolution" on the Web to find numerous sites pertaining to conflict resolution on local, national and global scales.

Listening with a Willingness to Change

Repeat this mantra: Conflict is good. When executive coach Timothy Ursiny holds sessions on conflict in the workplace, he first asks people to play the word association game with “conflict.”

Fight, argument, bitterness, anger are just a few that usually come up.

“We really fear conflict,” says Ursiny, author of *The Coward’s Guide to Conflict*, due next spring from Sourcebooks. But people don’t realize that without conflict, few good ideas would arise, nor would an organization change or improve.

“Without conflict, everybody would be saying the same thing all the time,” says Rick Mauer, author of *Why Don’t You Want What I Want?* (Bard Press). “Conflict allows you to have different points of view that allow somebody to see for instance, our membership is changing.”

Adds San Francisco mediator James Strock (www.jamesstrock.com), “Conflict is part of life, it goes with dealing with change. Nonprofits tend to be aiming toward a leadership role, which by definition is an agent of change.”

Yet Strock has seen a tendency in the nonprofit world to avoid crystalizing differences or even accepting conflict. “Because they’re not driven by a goal of financial success in a profit sense, measurements can be hard to come up with and it allows people to put off issues,” he says. “It can be because it seems incongruous with the sanctity of the mission.”

And that’s dangerous. Refusing to accept and effectively deal with conflict can lead to delayed decisions, anger, frustration, loss of direction and

ultimately, loss of valuable people.

To manage conflict effectively, a nonprofit must deal with issues of disagreement as an ongoing concern and make people understand how resolving conflict in a healthy way can build relationships and strengthen an organization. And conversely, how avoiding conflict can paralyze a group.

Often in nonprofit and volunteer-based organizations, the people who are drawn to work there are good-hearted people who sign on to the mission because they care—but are terrified of conflict, even seeing it as disrespectful. In fact, says Ursiny, “it’s more disrespectful to have a conflict and not bring it up.”

“One myth is if you’re going to volunteer, it’ll all be wonderful, there’ll be no conflict at all,” says Glen Wagner, a leadership coach and trainer with Advantage Coaching & Training in Wheaton, Ill. “We’ll feed the homeless and do good work and it’s going to be fun and everybody’s going to love us. It’s shocking when conflict arises.”

A basic tenet of conflict resolution is people live and act from their own reality, says Dr. Tracey Manning, a social psychologist and senior scholar at the Academy of Leadership at the University of Maryland. And a key to resolving conflict is to try to see things from another’s point of view.

The way people handle conflict arises not just from how conflict was handled in their homes when they were growing up, but also from how they feel about themselves. Are they confident, do they tend to trust others, do they tend to trust themselves?

Researchers have identified five

different ways that people handle conflict: by avoiding, accommodating, competing, compromising and collaborating. The last two are the most constructive ways of handling conflict, Manning says.

In any conflict, there are two issues: Preservation of the relationship and achieving a goal. Conflict arises when you are frustrated in reaching a goal. The conflict avoider loses both the relationship and the goal; he or she is so afraid of conflict, he gradually avoids the other person and loses the goal.

How do you make people feel safe with conflict?

As in many things, it’s a matter of trust.

Emphasis must be placed on healthy relationships among board members, between board and staff, and between staff and volunteers, says consultant Susan B. Wilson (www.execstrategies.com). “People will not share their intellectual best if they don’t first trust you.”

Mauer quotes actor Alan Alda: “We need to listen with a willingness to be changed.”

“In resolving conflicts, the relationship with other person is as important as the idea,” says Maurer. “If I believe we should do X, and you believe we should do Y, the typical way of handling that is for me to out-argue you. If I have more power than you, it’s an unfair argument. If I’m as interested in the relationship as the idea, I say, ‘You’re a right-minded person too. How are you connecting the dots?’ and allow me to be influenced.” ♦

All articles in this series were written by Patty Rhule.

Expectations Are at Heart of Conflicts

Conflict concerning volunteers tends to center on a simple cause: unmet expectations.

Volunteers are frustrated when they are assigned to menial tasks rather than the more fulfilling ones they had hoped to perform.

Staffers are frustrated that volunteers don't perform up to standard or fail to do assigned tasks—yet are loath to confront them about it. After all, they are *only* volunteers.

When organizations say that to strategic planning consultant Susan B. Wilson (www.execstrategies.com), her response is to the point: “Are you telling me you can’t ask them or you won’t ask them? This isn’t about your asking them to do this just because, you’re asking them because it contributes to the mission, purpose and values of the organization.”

Too often in nonprofit organizations that rely on volunteers, too little emphasis is placed on accountability, Wilson says. “People want to know what their contribution is, they want to be part of a team. They won’t know that unless they know who is doing what by when.”

Problem Solving

What follows are some common problems that arise with volunteers and advice on how to solve them.

Conflict: Volunteer isn’t doing what she is asked to do.

Resolution: Good upfront communication is the way to nip this matter in the bud. Competing demands on time is a concern for everyone; fitting volunteer work in can be an added challenge. First, be sure you screen volunteers effectively, says executive coach Tim Ursiny

(www.advantagecoaching.com), spelling out time expectations, deadlines and job descriptions. But even when that’s been done, there are times you need to confront a non-performing volunteer, says Judith Lindenberger, a consultant with nonprofits near Princeton, N.J. (www.lindenberger-group.com). “The best thing to do is call and say, ‘Can I help you, are you still interested, or do you know somebody else who might do it?’ And let them make the choice.”

Preparation

Conflict: Your volunteers are willing, but unskilled.

Resolution: Get them in for training. If there’s no budget for classroom training on the work of the volunteer, have volunteers learn by watching, says Ursiny.

Conflict: Volunteers feel they are forced to do “scut” work.

Resolution: Don’t make volunteers feel like second-class citizens, says Rick Mauer. “As in could you make copies of this, or do you want two creams or one with that coffee? Those kinds of functions are important, but the ... unintended message can be, we’re glad you’re here as a pair of hands, just don’t use your brain.”

Work with the volunteers and say, let’s look at what needs to be done and figure out the best way to do it. No one minds stuffing envelopes on occasion, but be sure the importance of stuffing those envelopes is clearly connected to the organization’s goals.

Be sure if you’re the executive director, you’re in the trenches with volunteers for the big fundraising campaign, buying pizza for the crew,

Mauer says. “So that when you’re done, everybody can breathe a sigh of relief and everybody can celebrate. ‘Yeah, we were in it together ...’”

Clarity

Conflict: Wishy-washy commitment on the part of a volunteer.

Resolution: Tie in the organization’s mission and values with the volunteer’s mission and values. Ask pointed questions about why they chose your organization, says Ursiny. You may find out the fit is not a good one, or you may create a real sense of buy-in. Ask questions like: What is it about working here that draws you to us? Why do you like working with people? Keep pushing for specifics, until you get down to the core value the volunteer is seeking to achieve through his or her work. “Pull out what their mission is,” says Ursiny. “Once you connect them, then you have a motivated person. If they get wishy-washy, you just remind them” of the tie-in.

Conflict: A person volunteers for the wrong reasons, for example, they don’t have a position of power at work or at home, so they volunteer so they can have power somewhere.

Resolution: For people who volunteer seeking personal clout, the attitude often is, “If I don’t get my way, I quit,” says leadership coach and trainer Glen Wagner of Advantage Coaching & Training in Wheaton, Ill. That might not be such a bad thing.

“The best organizations do fire volunteers,” says Wagner. “If a job is important enough to do, it’s important to do it well.” ♦

Fielding Internal Disagreements

Lynn Shaftic-Averill knows painfully well how devastating board conflict can be.

For three years, she was executive director of a small nonprofit that had previously functioned without one.

"It was difficult for some of the board members to let go of their authority ... one day I came in and found the dining room was being repainted because the board president had a conversation with a painting contractor her husband knew who was between jobs."

When she expressed frustration to the board that by-laws were being ignored, some perceived it simply as her desire for more power.

Deadend

A group was brought in to train the board; mediation was suggested. Shaftic-Averill sat at the table while each board member was asked "what they didn't like about me. I felt blind-sided. I was not allowed to respond."

The mediator then said the board and she needed to work out their personal conflicts one on one—end of mediation.

"I went home and realized my work environment had gone from one where we got things done with a lot of argument to now one that had just ground to a halt. Instead of resolving the issue of who was in charge of the agency, we became a group of women in a room having a catfight. It was entirely at the instigation of this consultant. So I quit."

The organization didn't just lose Shaftic-Averill; much of the senior staff has left and the group lost two major grants, one \$150,000 and another \$500,000 for a transitional

shelter project.

Shaftic-Averill says in retrospect, she'd have done things differently. "Sometimes when I ran into conflict, I didn't stop and acknowledge it. I didn't work with the individual to get to the heart of it and fix it on the spot." And the board simply overran the bylaws at its whim, something she wished she'd recognized earlier.

Averill says of her current post, "I didn't make a decision to commit myself heart and soul until I really got a chance to know the board. I saw a big difference: the board was comprised of professional individuals. They are familiar with their roles and they are very clear in their expectations of me. We are sit down once a year, do a review of our goals and our objectives, and keep communications very clear."

Solutions

Fortunately, not all board conflicts need to be resolved by a resignation.

Conflict: The board is micro-managing the staff, or the board is viewed as being detached and disinterested.

Resolution: This stems from a lack of clarity about the board's role—and perhaps more importantly, the board's value to the nonprofit, says Susan B. Wilson (www.exec-strategies.com), who consults with nonprofit organizations. She calls meetings of boards that combine praise and affirmation of the work the members are doing with specific, individual suggestions on how each can better help the organization's mission.

Conflict: Board members are clashing over the organization's mission and goals.

Resolution: Sometimes this is simply a matter of people agreeing on a goal, but disagreeing on how to achieve it. First, look at what all parties have in common, for instance, everyone agrees we need to raise funds, but how? Then seek creative solutions to achieve that goal. Be sure when recruiting board members that their personal mission for serving meshes with the nonprofit's mission.

Conflict: Board members aren't doing what the nonprofit needs them to do.

Resolution: This usually stems from board members not understanding what it is that's needed, or a reluctance on their part to, for example, hit up friends for contributions to the nonprofit. Part of the solution, says executive coach Timothy Ursiny, is clarifying the role of a board member: Are they expected to just give advice or are they needed to be ambassadors for the organization in the community and solicit large contributions?

"Board members don't want to put their friends under pressure," Ursiny says. "It's not laziness, it's more I don't want to put people on the spot."

Board members are more likely to refer friends and family when there's a non-pressure point entry to the organization. For example, the board member takes the friend to lunch to talk about the organization, share a story that will touch the heart, and then ask if he or she is open to being sent information about the group and receiving a follow-up phone call. It's a less pressured entree than immediately being pushed to write a check. ♦

When the Truth May Hurt

Giving feedback is the hardest thing for many people to do, whether in the for-profit or nonprofit world.

"The No. 1 conflict has to do with giving honest feedback to volunteers and from volunteer board members to employees," says Judith Lindenberg, a human resources consultant for nonprofits near Princeton, N.J. (www.lindenberg-group.com).

"Even when you're being paid to do it, it's hard to look somebody in the eye and say 'that piece of work just didn't measure up.'"

Nonetheless, it's critical for the health of an organization that exactly that be done.

When volunteers are asked what they want most from their service experience, they name five things, says strategic planning consultant Susan B. Wilson: to understand their contribution to the goal; to feel part of a team; to get feedback; to be heard; to hear thank-you.

When people aren't honest about performance, frustrations foment on matters that could have been easily resolved simply by addressing them. Board members may become disinterested when things aren't happening the way they'd like. Rumors flourish because issues aren't being addressed. The organization suffers, the staff suffers and the individual in question suffers needlessly.

"You're doing somebody a disservice when you're not telling them the truth about their performance," says Lindenberg. "Most people want to do a good job and none of us go through life without making mistakes. As long as you're given tools to learn how not to make mistakes,

you're going to be happier."

To the Point

Honest feedback is proactive. It starts from the point of hiring, or accepting someone as a volunteer. Clearly state and explain job and performance expectations.

"Decide ahead of time what the executive director will be judged on, so it's clear where he or she did a good job, not whether you like them, but whether or not they've done what you all decided were important

"Don't delay; be honest; and be direct."

for them to do," Lindenberg says. "You can like somebody a lot and be honest a lot and still give them honest feedback. If you don't say anything, there's going to be frustration and a bad situation."

Lindenberg has a program she calls "Truth or Consequences" in which she teaches people how to give feedback. "The most important thing is knowing it's OK."

Encourage people to "speak respectful truth," says Wilson. "People lie, they don't mean to—but when you sweep conflict under the carpet, it's dishonest."

A volunteer arrangement should be like an employee contract. "We should have expectations," says Rick Mauer, author of *Why Don't You Want What I Want?* "Just as a volunteer should have expectations for how they're treated, it's reasonable for you to say, Rick, this isn't up to the standard of what we want to go out in a mailing. Granted, I could leave. But why would you want to placate me so

I could continue doing sloppy work?" Mauer says managers who have trouble critiquing volunteers probably also have trouble talking to their paid staff.

Don't delay when giving negative feedback; do it right away, says Lindenberg. If you wait, you lose impact and your emotional level rises. If you're feeling nervous, look at the big picture: You want your organization to be successful and you want the person to be successful.

Other Strategies

- Be direct. Say, this was your action, this was its impact, how can we do better next time? "You're not saying the person is a terrible person," says Lindenberg. "You don't want to sound judgmental. You want to sound like a mirror, this is what I saw, this is the effect."

- Be a partner in the solution. "Leaving somebody in the lurch saying you screwed up, now fix it isn't helpful. You have to be a partner and work together on making the next performance better."

- Avoid terms such as "you always." Talk about a specific incident, don't go into the past.

- Follow up. Get back together and see how they're doing with the plan you worked out, says Lindenberg.

- Finally, "Praise in public, but *never* criticize in public—it's very damaging and hurtful," she says. "Let the person know that it's not them as a person that you're criticizing, it's the behavior and action that could be better and help them be more successful. Most people want to be the best they can be." ♦

Dealing with Contentious Clients

The marketing director of a YMCA hears from upset members when fees go up 20%.

A homeless man at a soup kitchen complains about the food.

Sometimes, even people who are trying to do the right thing by others make the very people they're trying to help unhappy.

And in that case, rather than pointing a finger at the client and sniffing about their exaggerated sense of entitlement, the nonprofit or volunteer should look inward.

Brian Polkinghorn, associate professor of conflict resolution and executive director of the Center for Conflict Resolution Inc. at Salisbury University in Maryland, tells of a terrific volunteer he knew in Florida who, when confronted with angry clients, would agree with them.

At a clothing giveaway, people would tell him "these clothes suck. He'd say 'you're damn right—we could do a better job. What could I do better for you tomorrow?'"

"The board didn't like that at all—that was too high-risk a response," Polkinghorn says. "He would say, I do know what people are telling me, and we're not giving them something they feel they need."

"You always have to look in first, then out," says Polkinghorn, who has worked with nonprofits to resolve conflicts in Florida and Maryland.

Original Intent

The first question to ask when a conflict arises between a nonprofit and client is, what was the original intent? If the service the recipient is complaining about is intentional, perhaps the organization needs to

work on a better developed sense of mission. "If the service that upset the client was unintentional, that's easier, you can make process changes," says Polkinghorn. "The response by the organization is 'if we had known that, we would have done something differently.'"

Organizations that are open to change will grow and improve from such a conflict, Polkinghorn says.

Often, the problem is a lack of input from the key stakeholders of an organization.

Have a Plan

He tells of a nonprofit in Florida, hired by the area Urban League on a civil governance project to involve the community in developing solutions to its problems. "The nonprofit had a bunch of good folks with research backgrounds who knew how to do community assessments," he says. But no one from the nonprofit was a person of color—a sharp contrast to the community it was serving.

They made adjustments, brought in researchers who better reflected the community. "Everyone's intentions were good, but the amount of suspicion raised made it difficult to proceed."

From the start, there should have been procedures in place for conflict resolution, and to ensure that key stakeholders were part of the process from start to completion.

"Instead of being mission-focused, it became a real personal problem and that doesn't do much good at all."

In a case such as this, first it's important to have a project clearly defined from the start. Set milestones—if conflicts arise, have a

mechanism in place to solve them. If conflicts arise, shut down the shop to get people to focus on resolving the conflict.

Expectations

Back to the homeless man, unhappy with his meal. First, it helps if the clients know what to expect. Polkinghorn tells of a man who fed the homeless in Fort Lauderdale on the beaches. "He'd tell them 'I don't know what's coming tomorrow, but I'll cook it and you can eat it.' It's more their frustration, you're serving the poor—turn the other cheek."

Some clients are really savvy and will tell volunteers "I'm going to talk to your grant maker, I think you're pocketing things."

To volunteers who are daunted by "ungrateful" clients, Polkinghorn asks them to re-examine why they volunteer, what motivates them. If one unhappy encounter turns them from volunteering, they weren't that devoted to start.

Simple problem solving involves active, reflective listening.

San Francisco mediator James Strock of San Francisco tells of a YMCA in turmoil over new exercise rooms. A number of people wanted new exercise rooms, but there was concern it would raise the cost and put a burden on others. The board was divided, but the membership was told and asked for its views. The membership came up with the suggestion that there be a different level of membership that would allow people who would use the rooms to pay for them, and other folks wouldn't be asked to pay for something they wouldn't use. "That's a simple example of a much bigger truth." ♦



The Daily Points of Light Award

July 2002

July 1, Eric Wolfe, Brazil, Ind., has volunteered countless hours to the 4-H program and local community service groups.

July 2, Arthur Finocchiaro, Rochester, N.Y., volunteers as a youth mentor, recruits other volunteers and serves on boards of several local non-profit agencies.

July 3, Dr. Roger Nooe, Knoxville, Tenn., volunteers to increase community awareness of homelessness, sharing his findings and knowledge with service providers.

July 4, Mary Haas, East Amherst, N.Y., helps the elderly and bereaved of her community as well as helping with supplies for international relief missions.



Mary Haas, July 4 winner

July 5, Education Bridge Builders AmeriCorps Program, Schenectady, N.Y., addresses the community's educational needs specifically in the area of literacy.

July 8, Westminster's Builders Club, Annandale, Va., encourages and coordinates community service for the 7th and 8th grade students of the Westminster School.

July 9, Scott and Laurie Schoen, Weston, Maine, volunteer time and money to benefit the community through their human service initiatives.

July 10, Paul McLaughlin,

Decatur, Ala., volunteers his time to various 4-H activities.

July 11, Gangs Out of Downey (GOOD), Downey, Calif., sponsors a variety of anti-gang programs to benefit at-risk students.

July 12, Kenneth Slaughter, Jackson, Miss., volunteers to benefit victims of stroke, spinal cord injury and traumatic brain injury.

July 15, The Intergenerational Child Care Center, Deerfield Beach, Fla., gives volunteers ages 15 to 90 structured educational interaction with pre-schoolers.

July 16, Carrie Elliott, Enola, Pa., coordinates volunteers of her high school's continuing program to mentor students in lower grades.

July 17, N.E. Focal Point Casa, Inc., Deerfield Beach, Fla., raises funds and recruits volunteers for a variety of programs to benefit those suffering from Alzheimers disease.

July 18, Michael Aponte, Virginia Beach, Va., mentors at-risk youth through the Making a Difference Foundation (MADF).

July 19, Women Empowered for Change, Offender Aid and Restoration, Arlington, Va., provides pre- and post-release support for inmates to overcome dysfunctional behavior.

July 22, Dick Schwinkendorf, Jensen Beach, Fla., serves as the warehouse manager for the United Way of Martin County's Volunteer and Community Resource Center's White Doves Christmas Project.

July 23, Sherie Kimball Braunersrither, Salt Lake City, Utah, organizes countless activities benefiting the students and faculty of Stansbury Elementary.

July 24, Fallan Branco, Brockton, Maine, has started her own organization, Teen Angels, which identifies

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.

people in the community who are in need and helps them in any way possible.

July 25, Richard Kelly, Edgewater, Fla., volunteers his time to benefit children through the Department of Children and Families in Volusia County.

July 26, Bob Field, Meridian, Ind., volunteers at The Learning Lab, which provides individualized educational programs for adults and families.

July 29, Marcia McFarland-Gray, Clarksburg, Maine, volunteers with the

(continued on page 28)

Interfaith Outreach

Just four days after three planes plummeted into the American landscape on Sept. 11, a handful of misguided vigilantes began killing American Arabs, defacing mosques and widening fissures among faiths. On Sept. 15, Adel Karas was killed in his San Gabriel, Calif., grocery store; Balbir Singh Sodhi was gunned down outside his Mesa, Ariz., gas station; Waqar Hasan, shot to death in his Dallas convenience store. On Sept. 21, Ali Almansoop was murdered in his Detroit home; on Sept. 29, Abdo Ali Ahmed was killed in Reedley, Calif.; on Oct. 13, Abdullah Nimer was murdered in Los Angeles.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations reports receiving 2,294 reports of violence and discrimination in the two months following Sept. 11. The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee points to almost 900 violent incidents in the first 30 days

after the attacks, and the FBI reports that anti-Islamic hate crimes reported by law enforcement agencies rose from 28 in 2000 to 481 in 2001.

But many—Muslims, Jews, Christians and others—joined hands in prayer, service and comfort. And many asked, How can we help? What can we do?

"We are connected to offer support, to help others. To do whatever we are moved to do. To reach into self and reach out."

"There was the initial backlash, but because of that there was an incredible outpouring of support," says Richard Anas Coburn, executive director of Dar al Islam in Washington, a nonprofit educational organization.

Father Will Crist recalls thinking that after Sept. 11, it sounded like Muslims are our enemies. "I wondered, who can I talk to, I don't even know any Muslims, I don't know where there's a mosque," says the Episcopal priest from Laguna Beach, Calif. "So I decided, before the month was out I would have lunch with three Muslims." And he did. For the next six months he went to the local mosque every Friday for prayer and lunch.

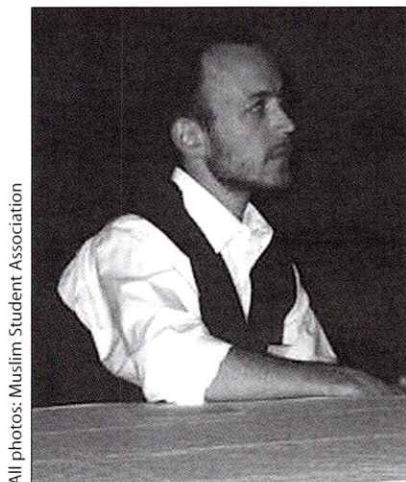
Crist's initial outreach blossomed. Soon there were five Christians and five Muslims having lunch. Then it was 14 couples, then 40, for dinner.

But Crist wanted more. He invited a local rabbi and the dialogue continued. Until 20 Christians, 20 Jews and 20 Muslims decided to build a home in Tijuana, Mexico. "Our next goal is to get 400 people to build eight houses in one weekend," he says.

Their interfaith effort was filmed for a documentary, *On Common Ground*, which is scheduled for release early this year. "It tells the story of us doing this together," Crist says.

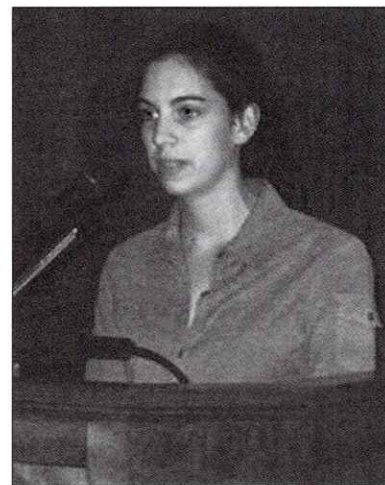
Quest to Understand

The Sept. 11 attacks heightened a national interest in and awareness of other faiths, spawning more than a handful of interfaith grassroots and community projects around the nation. Projects that are bridging gaps and enhancing understanding among cultures and religions, particularly among Christians, Jews and Muslims.



All photos: Muslim Student Association

Sean Blevins coordinated a Fast-A-Thon for Ramadan at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.



Katherine Gleason, Love Kitchen worker, spoke to those attending the event at the university.

For Some, Tolerance Helps Heal Sept. 11 Wounds

By Kathleen F. Phalen

"I think it's interesting what came out of Sept. 11," says Cynthia Sampson, president of the nonprofit Peace Discovery Initiative in Washington. She tells the tale of two Washington, D.C.-area women: one Quaker, the other Episcopalian. "They called the Dulles-area Muslim Center and offered to accompany Muslim women," says Sampson. "This has blossomed into the most wonderful interfaith grassroots network of women." From this initial effort, activities have stretched and several small groups of Muslim and Christian women now meet in each other's homes for sharing and community service planning. Some work on environmental issues, some feed the hungry.

Joint Celebration

Last December, the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ) in Orange County, Calif., held a Triple Celebration, to celebrate Chanukah, Christmas and Ramadan. They lit the Menorah and

offered Advent and sunset Ramadan prayers at the temple. "It was one of those things that make your heart choke," says Shazeen Mufti, program director. The NCCJ, a national human relations organization with strong interfaith programming, has been coordinating interfaith councils and community events long before Sept. 11, but it seemed particularly important after the attacks, says Mufti.

"The event was so successful we had to turn people away since we could only accommodate 400 people for dinner at the synagogue," she says. "During the dinner everyone had to sit with someone they didn't know. We knew we had been successful when a young

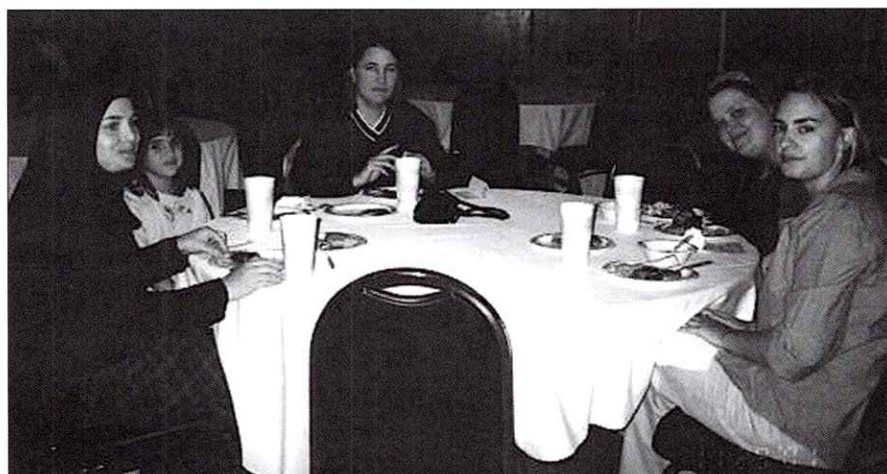


The Fast-A-Thon brought Muslims and non-Muslims together for a meal to break the Ramadan fast.

Muslim family, sitting with a Jewish and Christian family, handed their child around for everyone to hold. That takes a lot of trust."

The Orange County NCCJ also started an interfaith Community Cousins program, linking families of different faiths; an interfaith Thanksgiving program of 40 families who will share dinner together in each other's homes; an interfaith youth program that focuses on community service. "We have found that the No. 1 way to improve race relations is not through education but through interpersonal contact," says Mufti. "So we are finding ways to create these."

At the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, the Muslim Student Association held a Fast-a-Thon for Ramadan last year. Muslim students, who traditionally fast for Ramadan, ➤



The interfaith Fast-A-Thon attracted a diverse group of students.

invited non-Muslim students to fast with them for a day. Local businesses donated money for each non-Muslim faster. The money raised, \$500, was given to a local food pantry. Following the fast, the students broke their fast together in the university ballroom.

"Students were very receptive and wanted to participate," says Mostafa Alsharis, a Muslim student and director of diversity affairs at the University. "They said they had never experienced anything like this before and it was a good opportunity to work with Muslims first-hand."

This year the Knoxville student group plans to encourage other Muslim Student Associations around the country to hold Fast-a-Thons.

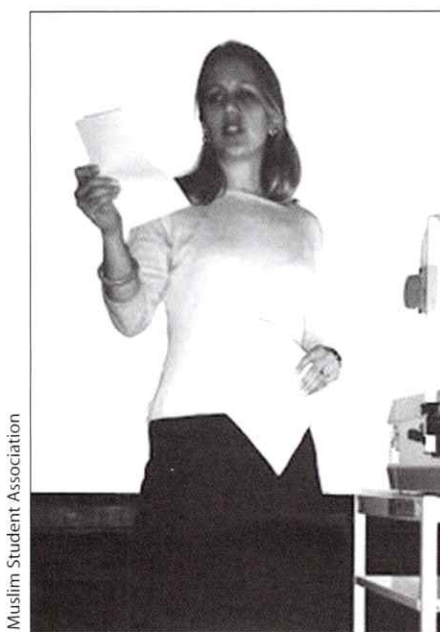
Beliefs Exchange

"We think that 9/11 is a little symptom of a terrible problem," says Peter W. Ochs, the Edgar Bronfman Professor of Modern Judaic Studies at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. "This is a major ominous sign of the potential breakdown in Western civilization."

Ochs, along with two Cambridge University scholars, founded the Children of Abraham Institute two years ago. The institute held its first interfaith event—a sharing of beliefs—at the University following Sept. 11.

CHAI, which has groups at Duke University, Indianapolis and Boston, hopes to establish community-based groups around the nation for interfaith study and sharing. (Already there are groups in Cambridge, England, Capetown, South Africa, and Singapore.)

"Over time, these circles of study and friendship should form friendship bonds and understanding bonds," says Ochs. "Then they, as a group, will respond to a crisis."



Muslim Student Association

Lee Murphy, Knox County Health Department nutritionist, addressed Fast-A-Thon participants.

Long before Sept. 11, Anas Coburn was teaching Muslims and non-Muslims about Islam. "Our work in this area focuses primarily on training non-Muslim American high school teachers to present Islam accurately in the classroom," says Coburn, executive director of Dar al Islam in Washington.

With a small paid staff, Dar al Islam depends on volunteers for speaking and other activities. Each summer, for the past nine years, social studies and history teachers have been applying for acceptance into their highly competitive, completely funded summer training in New Mexico.

"As part of their education, local Muslims take people on hikes and tell stories," says Coburn. "The general bias goes back to the Crusades ... it is our hope that we can help get to a point where understanding of Islam is somewhat balanced."

Cooperation Circles

Following the 1995 United Nations 50th Anniversary celebration at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, the idea for the United Religions Initiative emerged. By 1996, a uniquely grassroots effort based on daily interfaith cooperation began. Today there are 15,000 volunteer members and 200 Cooperation Circles, self-organizing groups with seven or more people from at least three religions, spiritual expressions or indigenous traditions. The Cooperation Circles do everything from feeding people and helping the environment to spiritual deepening, says Barbara Hartford, who coordinates URI's peace building efforts.

"It is so powerful when you open up to another religion, being able to not be afraid ... these conversations are the difference between fear and love—the antidote for our times," says Hartford.

A Washington, D.C. Cooperation Circle has joined with Habitat for Humanity to sponsor building a house in the Anacostia section of D.C. Meeting in October, this group of Muslim, Sufi, Buddhist, Christian, Shamanic and Christian Scientist friends, neighbors and soon-to-be friends prayed in unison. Prayed from one to the other. They call themselves a network of spiritual first-responders.

"I felt an urgent need to be in connection with others in the area; to be able to respond in prayer when there's an emergency," says Susanna McIlwaine, who volunteers with URI and many other interfaith efforts. "We are connected to offer support, to help others. To do whatever we are moved to do. To reach into self and reach out." ♦

Kathleen F. Phalen is a freelance writer based in Charlottesville, Va.

A State 'Steeped in Service'

by Olene S. Walker

The spirit of service and volunteerism in Utah was evident to the world as Salt Lake City hosted the 2002 Olympic Winter Games, utilizing over 26,000 volunteers. Service and volunteerism in Utah, however, encompasses much more than the recent Olympic events. Utah has a tradition steeped in service as volunteers on a daily basis work to build and strengthen their communities.

The fall 2002 edition of this magazine featured "The New Literacy Fundamental," an issue that has long been a passion of my own. Literacy, in all its many facets, is being addressed in large part through volunteer efforts here in Utah. Some efforts are in the public eye, while others are hidden from view. All efforts, however, have a place, a purpose, and an impact on literacy in Utah.

In 1997, the state of Utah set some specific literacy goals in conjunction with our Utah's Promise initiative. One of these goals entailed ensuring that 12,000 youth who were at risk of becoming functionally illiterate would read at a 3rd-grade level or better. Through the help of volunteers, AmeriCorps members, Volunteer Centers, schools, colleges and universities, adult literacy programs, family literacy centers and numerous other community organizations, our state government is able to support their efforts and enhance their accomplishments.

In Wayne County, Utah, a small rural community with just over 3,250 citizens, a group of residents working on Utah's Promise identified their need for a local library. These volun-



Olene S. Walker is lieutenant governor of Utah and a lifelong volunteer.

teers, working with the local school district, secured a location in an

unused wing of a school district building. Working with the State Book Mobile, they arranged to relocate the Book Mobile's depository of books from a town 60 miles away, and reroute the Book Mobile. This provided them with the books they needed to fill their newly remodeled wing of the district's building.

Almost eight months after beginning the process, Wayne County opened the doors to its first public library. This success was the result of the dedication of local volunteers.

As part of Utah's Promise to fulfill one of the five goals that every child read at or above grade-level by 3rd grade, Utah's Commission on Volunteers is providing the foundation for this goal to be met. ♦

VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP



Yes! I want to subscribe to Volunteer Leadership

☐ 1 year (4 issues) \$30; ☐ 2 years (8 issues) \$58; ☐ 3 years (12 issues) \$82

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Email _____

My method of payment (in US dollars only) is:

☐ Check (payable to *Volunteer Leadership*)

☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA ☐ American Express

Card # _____ Exp. _____

Signature _____

Mail to: The Points of Light Foundation, c/o Gina Parks 1400 I St., NW,
Suite 800, Washington, DC 20005 (202) 729-8118 • Fax (202) 729-8105

Plug in to the Power of Corporate Volunteer Councils

By Reed Dewey and Katie Davies

American businesses more than ever are taking a leadership role in encouraging their employees to volunteer in the community. Companies have seen the benefits of working together to solve community challenges. The result has been a dramatic growth in networks of businesses meeting on a regular basis to share best practices and organize events around workplace volunteering.

These groups, often called Corporate Volunteer Councils (CVCs), are coalitions of local businesses and corporations who either have active employee and retiree volunteer involvement programs or are interested in initiating such programs. In different parts of the country, CVCs are also known as Corporate Volunteerism Councils and Business Volunteer Councils (BVC), among other names. The variety simply reflects differing preferences of the founding group.

The opportunity for engaging CVCs is ideal. In the spring of 2002, President Bush initiated the Business Strengthening America (BSA) initiative with the help of CEOs from some of America's leading corporations. BSA is a national, business-driven movement to engage companies—from Fortune 500 corporations to small locally owned businesses—in a campaign to strengthen American society through civic engagement and service. "CVCs play an instrumental

role in engaging businesses to involve their employees in volunteering," states Jeff Hoffman, vice president of Worldwide Outreach with The Walt Disney Co. and a member of the BSA initiative.

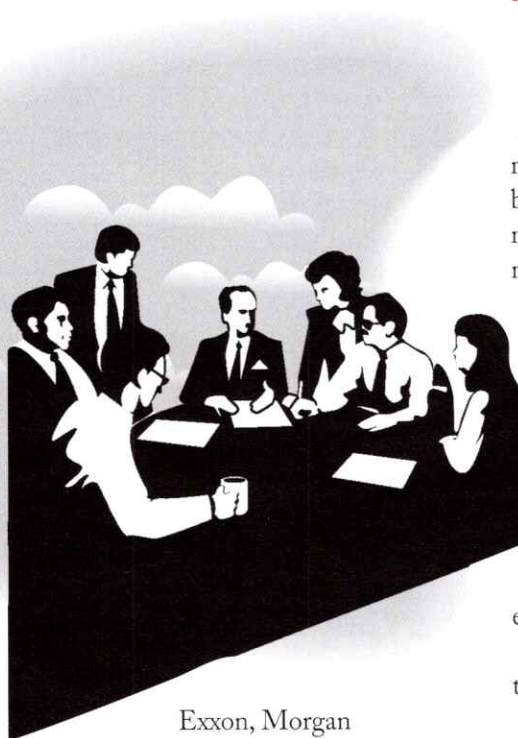
The first CVC was created in the early 1970s when New York City company representatives with employee volunteer programs from

Maryland CVC and adviser for the Points of Light Foundation National Council on Workplace Volunteerism. Kirk estimates there are more than 3,100 businesses currently affiliated with CVCs nationwide. CVCs are usually run through Volunteer Centers, United Way agencies or as private nonprofits.

Positives

CVCs are formed for a variety of reasons, depending on the needs of the local community and the composition of its membership. Usually membership of a CVC is limited to businesses, but CVCs typically have many opportunities to interact with nonprofits. Companies join for a variety of reasons, including the opportunity to:

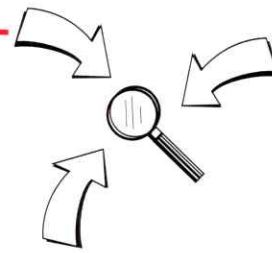
- network among peers;
- increase visibility through joint projects;
- share best practices on employee/retiree volunteer programs;
- promote workplace volunteerism;
- provide avenues for professional development for company staffers;
- learn about community service agencies and their need for business resources;
- form partnerships to impact social issues better, particularly those too large for one company to undertake alone.



Exxon, Morgan Guarantee and The Chase Manhattan Bank worked with the Mayor's Voluntary Action Center to exchange ideas and information. By 1992, more than 45 corporations joined what became Corporate Volunteers of New York.

Currently more than 100 CVCs exist across the country. "CVCs and their member companies have a terrific capacity right now to address the social problems our nation faces," says Pat Kirk, a member of the Central

While many CVCs have only business members, they know the importance of working closely with community-based organizations to address serious social problems.



Often nonprofit organizations are invited to serve on panels and help determine how to engage more companies and their employees in community service. Joint projects sponsored through CVCs have allowed small businesses to partner with a broader network of companies.

"As a small business owner, membership in the Corporate Volunteer Council of Central Maryland has given my company the opportunity to work with small and large businesses to plan group projects that have a long-term impact on the community," states Don Kirk, president of Windsor Electric Co. Inc.

At their roots, CVCs help businesses learn from each other in order to serve the community better. As Diane Scott, community relations manager with the *Kansas City Star* newspaper puts it, "My CVC provides me continued support from my counterparts in other companies. I really believe every community should have a CVC."

CVC Snapshot

The Metropolitan Atlanta Corporate Volunteerism Council (MACVC) has emerged as a leader in the promotion of workplace volunteerism in Atlanta and as an example nationwide. "The council has played an instrumental role in the increased interest and participation of local corporations in the betterment of our community," says Mark O'Connell, president of United Way Metro Atlanta.

MACVC is a 10-year-old professional association with more than 70 businesses who have employee volunteer programs or who are interested

in developing one. The council works to develop community involvement programs in partnership with nonprofit organizations. Anticipating and responding to the changing needs of the Atlanta community is one of the council's main objectives. Cooperation within the business community through collaborative efforts is emphasized and the council provides an effective forum for training, exchanging ideas and information on workplace volunteerism. For the past five years, MACVC has also held a corporate community service awards program that has effectively increased business involvement in the Atlanta Metro region. Employees from MACVC member businesses volunteer more than \$15 million worth of time each year.

Membership includes large, medium and small businesses. Affiliate members are nonprofit organization representatives involved in volunteer administration to benefit other non-

profit organizations. Affiliate members include organizations such as United Way, Hands on Atlanta and the Council on Volunteer Administrators. An employee of the United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta staffs MACVC.

Centers' Role

Through the years, Volunteer Centers have played an active role in supporting CVCs by locating volunteer opportunities and providing information on local social problems. In addition, more than 50% of CVCs are run through Volunteer Centers. "The CVC Twin Cities is strengthened by our relationship with the Volunteer Resource Center whose staff help us maximize our impact in the community," says Barb Alfrey, volunteer programs manager with General Mills and an active member of CVC Twin Cities. In this capacity,

(continued on page 25)

Starting a CVC

- **Identify leadership and form a planning task force.** CVCs can be initiated by a nonprofit such as a volunteer center or by businesses. Business leaders should play a central leadership role in developing the council.
- **Identify goals and strategies.** Identify the overall CVC mission, purpose and objectives through a strategic planning process.
- **Develop the CVC structure.** Determine the composition of the council's membership. Will it be made up solely of business leaders? How will the CVC be organized and run?
- **Build capacity.** Pick two or three priority areas—such as establishing working committees, or building membership along with determining what services and programs the council will offer its members.
- **Build partnerships with community organizations.** Local nonprofits know the community's needs and have specific resources and knowledge essential to a CVC's program planning.

Growing Volunteers

Americans volunteer. And we do so in huge numbers: According to research by Independent Sector, 83.9 million adults—or 44% of Americans over 21—volunteered an average of 3.6 hours a week in 2000, the last year for which statistics are available. The actual number of volunteers across the country is likely much higher, since these figures only reflect individuals who volunteered with organizations and do not take into account people who might work through their houses of worship or in a more informal setting, like tutoring kids or helping out seniors in the neighborhood.

Without the billions of donated hours—15.5 billion in 2000 alone, according to Independent Sector—nonprofits would not be able to do even a fraction of the work they do.

Often people come to an organization because of a particular event or activity. Known as “episodic” volunteers, these people might sign up to help out with a once-a-year walkathon, a clean-up day or even a black-tie event. They might be attracted to the event itself, or they might become involved through their employers, church or social group. Or they might decide to take part in a national volunteering event. This past Oct. 26, for instance, an estimated 3 million

people participated in Make A Difference Day.

Volunteer ranks also swell in response to a great celebration, like



St. Anthony Foundation

Volunteer at St. Anthony Foundation in San Francisco prepares holiday meal.

the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, or a great tragedy, like the events of Sept. 11. And regardless of what initially motivates people to volunteer, the challenge facing nonprofit organizations across the country is how to take those “one-timers” and nurture them into long-term volunteers.

Soul Food

For 15 years, the Village Temple Soup Kitchen in New York City has been serving a Saturday lunch to 150 homeless and needy people. “We feed about 8,000 people a year,” says J. Dean Chavooshian, chairman of the Village Temple Soup Kitchen, which is affiliated with Congregation B’nai Israel.

The soup kitchen receives food and supplies through in-kind donations and from distributions from the New York City Food Bank and City Harvest, a nonprofit organization that is the largest and oldest food rescue program in the world.

Every week, they prepare sandwiches, fruit salad and soup—15 to 20 gallons a week. “We take great pride in making excellent soup,” Chavooshian boasts.

Like New York City itself, the group’s volunteers are diverse. “We are fully staffed by volunteers. Some are temple members, but most are not,” he says. “Our volunteers come from the entire region, not just New

York City. More schools are requiring kids to have community service hours before they graduate, and some of them come here. We have volunteers in all age groups. I have one lady who’s 95 who works there every week.

“People hear about us from word of mouth and through the Internet.

How to Transform One-Timers into Long-Timers

by Roy DeLaMar

In the past year, we have had hundreds of volunteer inquiries from people who heard about us online," he says.

When it comes to converting a one-time volunteer to a regular, Chavooshian says, "There's really only one thing I can do, and that is encourage people to come back. Once they're here, I can make sure they're engaged, busy and feel like they're making a difference. And at the end of the day, I thank them. The key is to make people feel important and needed."

Chavooshian believes it is essential for a nonprofit of any size to be realistic about how many volunteers it can really use at one time. "Since Sept. 11, more people are interested in getting involved in a very hands-on way," he says. "I've gotten calls from entire church groups that want to come in and volunteer, but we just don't need that many people at one time. It's important for us to limit groups to four or five people at a time. You don't want to have too many people and not enough work to go around."



NAMES Project Foundation

Volunteers assemble AIDS Quilt panels in Washington, D.C.

Conversely, there are times when finding enough people is a struggle: "Many people assume it's hard to find volunteers around the holidays," he says, "but in fact, the summer is much more challenging."

He adds, "The best advice for creating regular volunteers is to foster a warm, friendly atmosphere. We stress

that this is a family of people. There really is no hierarchy or jealousy here," he says. "Everyone takes ownership and feels that it is his or her kitchen."

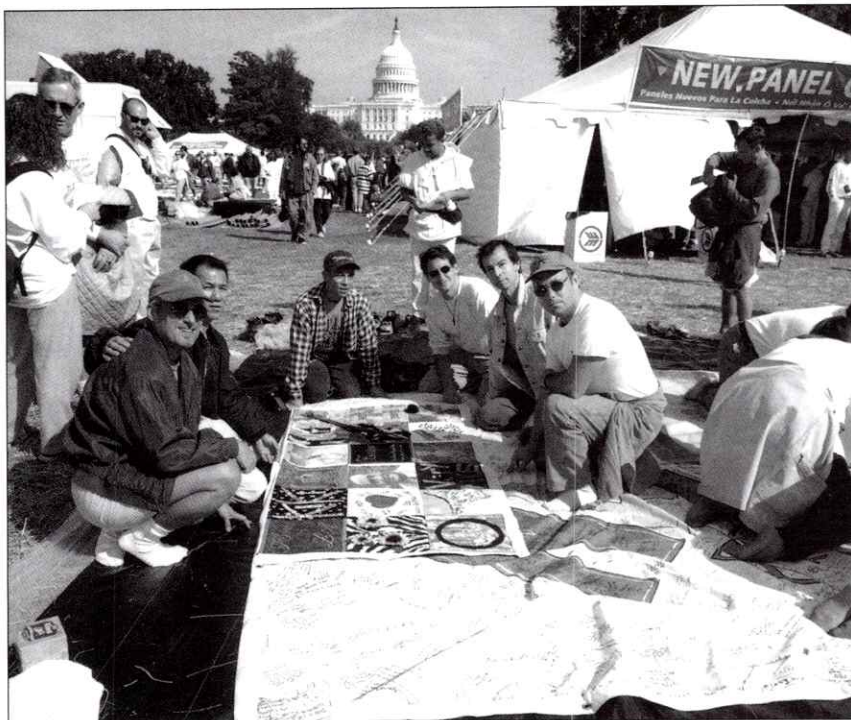
Stitches of Hope

"Many of our volunteers initially come in to make a panel in honor of someone they have lost to AIDS. It's a very emotional connection," says Aida Rentas, manager of Volunteer and Community Relations for the NAMES Project Foundation.

Headquartered in Atlanta, the NAMES Project is made up of 23 chapters across the country, and is best known for the 44,000-panel AIDS Quilt.

"There are so many reasons people volunteer," she says. Besides memorializing a loved one, some have to do some sort of community service and come to us. And still others just like to quilt."

Rentas believes it is essential to become familiar with all volunteers. "I profile my volunteers. I peer into their lives and see what their skills



Volunteers show their contribution to the AIDS Quilt.

and availabilities might be. And I try to connect with them, to understand why they are volunteers," she explains. "They might have come in with the intention of just working on a panel and not coming back. But when I have something I think they might like to do, I call them. If they will come once, they will come twice. And I always suggest that they bring their friends, too."

Volunteer Gold

The entire country was swept up in the excitement of the Winter Olympics last February, but nowhere was it felt more strongly than in the games' host city, Salt Lake City. People were eager to lend their time and talent just to be a part of the international sporting spectacular.

"We had a tremendous response during the Olympics," says Joshua Pederson, director, 211 Volunteer Center, in Salt Lake City. "Sixty thousand people signed up during the games. In fact, we were con-

cerned that other organizations would be losing regular volunteers to the Olympics.

"And," he adds, "the Olympics generated a tremendous spirit of volunteerism that is still very active here in Salt Lake City." Many of those Olympic volunteers have gone on to join other organizations through the



Volunteer Center.

The 211 Volunteer Center, which is part of the Volunteer Center National Network, is an information and referral center. "We make it easier for people to get connected," explains Pederson. "We offer information about finding volunteer opportunities and work with a volunteer coordinators network of about 300 trained professionals. We help bring 37 new volunteers into the community each day."

"One-time projects triple during



211 Volunteer Center

Volunteers serve drinks at the Salt Lake City Olympics.

the holidays, but people are looking for long-term commitments," says Pederson. "It's important to remind people that you still feed hungry people in January and February. Let them know there are needs throughout the year."

He believes that the person who first interacts with potential volunteers plays a crucial role in making people feel welcome and wanted. "I can't stress enough the importance of the volunteer coordinator in the entire process," he says. "Organizations need to recognize that the volunteer coordinator really is like a staff supervisor, except their staff isn't on

the payroll.

"Understand why the volunteer is there: Is he or she looking for some recognition, or more comfortable with anonymous service? Work with volunteers' expectations," he suggests. "Invite them to come back, and make coming back easy: Return phone calls; don't create barriers. Let them know you appreciate what they did. Remember, volunteers feel good if you just remember their names and say, 'We need you.'" ♦

Roy DeLaMar, a freelance writer based in Philadelphia, is a regular contributor to Volunteer Leadership.

Tips for Nonprofits

VolunteerMatch.com is a nonprofit online service that helps interested volunteers get involved with community service organizations throughout the United States. Jason Willett, VolunteerMatch.com's director of communications, offers these tips for turning the one-time volunteer into a repeat customer.

- **Sell your goals.** People respond to an organization's mission. If they believe in what you are doing, they're more likely to sign up for the long haul. And once they participate, they will feel like they're contributing to the group's overall success.
- **Know your needs.** Assess your group's needs and communicate them effectively. People want to help, but they have limited time.
- **Develop detailed descriptions when listing any volunteer opportunities.** Make sure people know what they're getting into. And remember, one communication approach does not fit all; tailor your message to your audience.
- **Do not make assumptions.** A person's profession will not necessarily dictate the kind of volunteer work she'd like to do. The bank president, for instance, might enjoy stuffing envelopes for a change of pace.
- **Keep volunteers happy.** Be careful about moving a volunteer to another opportunity that you think might be a better fit. Value the volunteer's satisfaction above your immediate needs.
- **Coordinate the coordinator.** It is really important to have a solid, highly skilled volunteer coordinator who is really adept at reading people and responding to their needs. But the volunteer coordinator should not be the only point of contact for volunteers. Everyone should welcome volunteers and make them feel at home.
- **Organize a recognition event.** It doesn't have to be a big shindig, just a casual opportunity for volunteers to meet staff and feel valued and connected with the organization.

Plug in to CVCs

(continued from page 21)

the centers usually run the CVC as one of their programs, providing administrative and program support for CVC members. Volunteer Centers also benefit through their partnerships with CVCs, often resulting in increased support in the form of funding, board members and in-kind donations.

The Points of Light Foundation, in cooperation with The National Council on Workplace Volunteerism, conducted surveys and focus groups that indicated CVC leaders wanted a national membership program. CVC leaders expressed the desire for greater collaboration, networking and sharing of resources among counterparts nationwide.

The current membership program provides such benefits as a quarterly newsletter, unlimited technical assistance, a CVC directory and foundation discounts for conferences, meetings and publications. ♦

Reed Dewey is director of corporate partnerships at the Points of Light Foundation. Katie Davies formerly worked in Corporate Volunteer Development at the Foundation.

Want to Know More?

The Points of Light Foundation's Corporate Volunteer Development Department supports a national network of CVCs. A variety of tools are available to help establish and strengthen CVCs.

For assistance, e-mail cvc@pointsoflight.org or call Reed Dewey at 202/729-8175.

To access a list of CVCs nationwide: www.pointsoflight.org/organizations/corp_vol_council.cfm

Hiring Consultants

Hiring a consultant doesn't have to be scary, expensive or lots of work. I know, because I have both hired consultants and I work as one. If you want to learn how to find good consultants who will help you get the results you need, read on.

In my experience, there are five essential steps to take when choosing and using consultants:

- discern your needs;
- give yourself permission;
- pick the best;
- manage the process;
- assess the value.

Discern Your Needs

First, ask yourself, what is the problem that needs to be addressed? Answering this question helps you clearly state what needs to be done. Only when this is accomplished can you proceed.

Your reasons for hiring a consultant could include:

- You don't know how. A consultant offers skills and expertise you don't have in-house.
- You don't have the time. A consultant, guided by experience and expertise, can get the job done more quickly.
- You can't assign it to anyone in-house. A consultant can work on confidential projects (such as hiring or firing).
- You need an outside perspective. You might need a consultant when you are looking for someone to see the situation objectively, without the filters and preconceived notions that internal people may have, such as designing, conducting and presenting



results of a climate survey.

- You need everyone to participate. Using a consultant will enable all staff and volunteers to participate fully in a process such as strategic planning, without one of them having to wear a facilitator's or coordinator's hat too.
- You need to learn best practices. Because they have a breadth of experiences from different organizations, a consultant can ask the right questions, moving your organization to greater learning and success.

Ten years ago, I was working as

the senior human resources consultant for Brown-Forman Corp., a Fortune 500 company. Brown-Forman was becoming global and there were not many employees with international experience. In addition, of the 7,500 employees, there were no minorities and one woman in the top ranks—yet women and minorities purchased the products. When we took a closer look at the top executives, we discovered that 25% would retire within the next 10 years. We had definite discernible needs.

Give Yourself Permission

Imagine you're climbing a mountain. There are hundreds of trails. Some lead nowhere, some lead back to the bottom, some lead around and around and some lead to the top. Your job is to get to the top. While you may have climbed mountains before, you have never climbed this one, and time is of the essence.

We all face difficult times when there is no new input, no objective analysis, no one to talk to, no one to share ideas with, and no one who can give advice based on experience and objective observation.

It is exactly those times when we need a guide who has been there, done that, to help us make the best decisions and lead us to the top.

Because of the needs that were determined at my former company—the need to become international, the need to increase the number of women and minorities in senior positions and the need to retain organizational knowledge—the company decided to implement a mentoring program. I was given the job. I had a

Well-Chosen, They're a Boon to Nonprofits

By Judith G. Lindenburger

full plate and no experience developing a mentoring program. I decided that I needed help in two ways.

First, I asked that I team with a senior executive who could add his name, influence and wisdom to the initiative. I was teamed with the chief information officer, who provided invaluable leadership. Second, I asked for a budget to hire a consultant. My boss agreed that hiring a consultant would move the process along more quickly and gave us a budget.

Pick the Best

The best ways to find a good consultant include:

- Ask around—word of mouth is still the best way to get information on which consultants have done good work in the past.
- Rehire a known consultant who has done a similar or equally difficult job or ask a consultant you trust for a referral.
- Use lists of qualified experts—you can get these from professional organizations, colleges and universities, government agencies and volunteer groups.

Request proposals from consultants you're considering for the job. A proposal should outline both how the consultant would meet your organization's goals or objectives and the cost. Choose a short list of the best people or firms from those who send in proposals and set up interviews with them.

Answers to the following questions should give you a good idea of what you can expect from a consultant:

- Who have you worked with?
- What have you done?
- What were the results?
- What is your specific expertise?
- What don't you do well?
- Evaluate each candidate on the three C's:
 - Competence—Can he or she do the job?
 - Compatibility—Can he do the job here in this organization?
 - Chemistry—Will she and the team work well together?

Finally, be sure to check references listed from previous jobs. At Brown-Forman, not knowing anyone who specialized in mentoring, I read articles and books on mentoring, searching for authors who might be good consultants. I also asked other human resources professionals who they would recommend. A former employee recommended an expert in mentoring. We interviewed her, read her articles and checked her references. What the references said sold us—they all said that the consultant helped their organizations learn new skills and that she was a pleasure to work with.

Manage the Process

It's essential to have a contract with the consultant that clearly states who is responsible for what. A contract is a two-way street. You expect the consultant to do a good job, produce acceptable results and complete the work on schedule. The consultant expects to be paid on time for the work he or she does.

Select a project leader who will meet regularly with the consultant to review progress and keep track of

expenses. The project leader should also meet regularly with members of your organization to let them know how things are going.

To make the consulting experience a success, remember to:

- Talk over your expectations with the consultant to ensure that they are reasonable and achievable.
- Anticipate and provide the resources your consultant will need such as time, information and access.

At Brown-Forman, I met with the mentoring consultant several times to outline what we wanted to achieve in the next year. We assigned responsibilities and set a budget. And I made myself available to the consultant by providing background information and meeting regularly.

Assess the Value

When the consultant has finished the work for you, it is useful to review the whole experience. Look at both the accomplishments and problem areas.

Did the consultant help the organization solve the problem? Is your organization better off as a result of the services of the consultant? Has the organization learned a new skill?

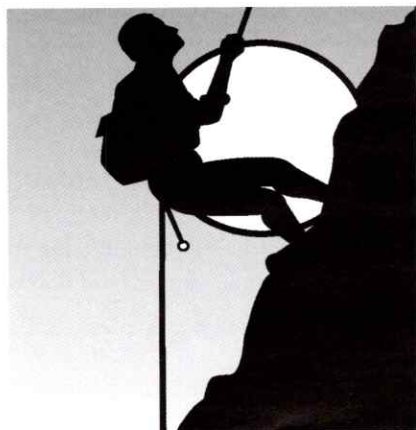
At Brown-Forman, one year after we started, we had a highly successful mentoring program in which 90% of our top executives participated as mentors. We won several external awards for our mentoring program, and the consultant and I published an article on our experience.

Ten years later, I am happy to report that the mentoring program is still strong and we achieved what ➡



we set out to achieve. The company has women and minorities in the top ranks. The products are sold worldwide. And there is a process to capture organizational wisdom from retiring executives.

Expect that over the long term, advice from a good consultant will help you choose the right trail more times than not; will help you take short cuts rather than reinventing the wheel; will improve your chances for success; and will make your job much easier on your climb to the top of the mountain. ♦



Judith Lindenberg is the principal of The Lindenberg Group, a human resources consulting company. Contact her at 609-730-1049; info@lindenberggroup.com.

Daily Points of Light

(continued from page 15)

Clarksburg School and the Clarksburg After-School Program of Enrichment and Reading.

July 30, Ted and Lucy Prettyman, Teasdale, Utah, volunteer as mentors in the Youth and Families with Promise (YFP) Youth at Risk mentoring program.

July 31, Lakeside High School Key Club (10th-12th graders), Garland, Alaska, provides a variety of volunteer services benefiting the community.

August 2002

Aug. 1, The Windham Region Homeless Coalition, Willimantic, Conn., assists homeless individuals and families with housing needs.

Aug. 2, Dr. Richard Hudson, Bayboro, N.C., collaborated with St. Thomas Episcopal Church, after retiring, to start Hope Clinic, which provides free medical care to the working poor.

Aug. 5, Alexa Jones, Andalusia, Ala., founded The Renaissance Foundation of Alabama, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing arts education in rural schools and communities.

Aug. 6, Jacqueline McAdam, Milinocket, Maine, founded Katahdin Area Support Group for cancer patients and their families.

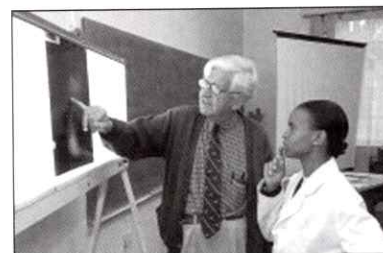
Aug. 7, Elizabeth Kirkman, Seminole, Fla., volunteers her time to a variety of hospice-affiliated activities.

Aug. 8, Health Volunteers Overseas, Washington, D.C., provides training and education to health-care providers in the lesser developed nations of the world.

Aug. 9, Partners In Care, Severna Park, Md., provides volunteer services to seniors living in their own homes.

Aug. 12, David Solem, Billings, Mont., has volunteered countless hours mentoring troubled youth at Friendship House.

Aug. 13, Sheral "Oscar" Merz, Kearns, Utah, coordinates humanitarian aid for Adopt-A-Native Elder Program.



Health Volunteers Overseas, August 8 winner

ian aid for Adopt-A-Native Elder Program.

Aug. 14, Team Tobati of Kingswood, Oxford School, West Hartford, Conn., provides resources and manual labor to improve education and health care in Tobati, Paraguay.

Aug. 15, Trotter's Café and Bakery Staff, St. Paul, Minn., promote volunteering and provide volunteer service to various local and national organizations.

Aug. 16, Bryan McClure, 13, East Lansing, Mich., raised money through pledges for a 40-mile bike ride he hopes to do annually to benefit his friend Victoria, 11, who is battling cancer.

Aug. 19, Moses E. M. Timah, Cairo, Ill., focuses on assisting and educating impoverished communities about health-care issues.

Aug. 20, Kathy Gowans, Orem, Utah, mobilizes community volunteers to increase literacy at the local elementary school.

Aug. 21, Saddlebrooke Community Outreach, Inc., Tucson, Ariz., addresses quality of life issues for impoverished area families.

Aug. 22, Client As A Volunteer/Jewish Family Service of Greater Wilkes-Barre, Pa, coordinates volunteer opportunities for clients they are counseling to improve self-esteem and serve those less fortunate.

Aug. 23, Curtis Sliwa, New York, N.Y., organizer of Guardian Angels, continues to volunteer time and effort for numerous community improvement projects.

Aug. 26, Antonio Alonso, Tulsa, Okla., has created programs and services at Tulsa Community College,

increasing accessibility to higher education by the traditionally underserved community.

Aug. 27, Scrap Mettle SOUL (Stories Of Urban Life), Chicago, Ill., produces oral history-based performances to empower individuals, bond the community and seed further community-building activity.

Aug. 28, Charles Shane, 80, Portage, Mich., volunteers his time for a variety of agencies providing hands-on help to many recipients.

Aug. 29, Debi Johnson and Terri McAllister, Salt Lake City, Utah, volunteer their time to improving the education and wellbeing of the children of Mill Creek Elementary.

Aug. 30, College Bound, Washington, D.C., creates opportunities for at-risk youth to gain insight into the work of higher education.

September 2002

Sept. 2, Heather Young, Blanding, Utah, volunteers with a variety of agencies benefiting the youth of San Juan County.

Sept. 3, Brian Orloff, Clearwater, Fla., devotes his free time to hospice patients and their families.

Sept. 4, Teen Challenge, Decatur, Ill., provides service to people who are struggling with alcohol and drug addiction.

Sept. 5, Louise King, Dixmoor, Ill., encourages youth to volunteer in community through her organization, Service Connection.

Sept. 6, Paula Lucas, Portland,



National Roofing Contractors Association, Sept. 11 winner

Ore., founded and operates the only international toll-free domestic violence crisis line, 866-USWOMEN, for battered American women and children living in foreign countries.

Sept. 9, Southwest Christian Hospice and Hope House, Union City, Ga., provides free health care, spiritual and emotional support for terminally ill patients and their families.

Sept. 10, Vickie King, Ogden, Utah, dedicates her time to search and rescue missions with her dog as well as educating the public about wilderness safety.

Sept. 11, National Roofing Contractors Association, Rosemont, Ill., coordinated the re-roofing of the Pentagon after Sept. 11 as a gift to the country.

Sept. 12, Marleau Quick, Salt Lake City, Utah, volunteers as a reading assistant for the 2nd graders of Lincoln Elementary.

Sept. 13, Jessica Silvestri, Struthers, Ohio, started a local collection for the "Call to Protect" program, a national organization that collects cell phones, reprograms them for emergency numbers and distributes them to victims of domestic violence.

Sept. 16, Jennifer Lynn Crawley, Arkadelphia, Ark., is committed to helping children discover and participate in music programs.

Sept. 17, Nonprofit Financial Center, Chicago, Ill., provides a comprehensive range of financial support to community-based organizations in need.

Sept. 18, Frank Barker, Jacksonville, Fla., volunteers his time administratively and hands-on to benefit HabiJax, the Jacksonville affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International.

Sept. 19, Sandi Martin, Salt Lake City, Utah, developed a literacy skills program for children utilizing certified therapy animals and their owners as literacy mentors.

Sept. 20, Solomon's Porch Medical Outreach, Tucson, Ariz., assists the working poor, uninsured and underinsured, by providing and assisting in



Angelina Kelly, Sept. 26 winner

accessing medical care.

Sept. 23, Ilene Gorzitze, Salt Lake City, Utah, devotes her retirement hours to the improvement of Physical Education at Upland Terrace Elementary School.

Sept. 24, Lancaster Area Victims Offender Reconciliation Program, Lancaster, Pa., provides opportunities for victim restoration and offender accountability through controlled mediation.

Sept. 25, Rainbow Bridge, Denver, Colo., enhances the lives of nursing home elders by coordinating volunteer visits and activities.

Sept. 26, Angelina Kelly, 16, Billings, Mont., volunteers with several organizations that benefit the youth of her community.

Sept. 27, Kevin Medina, Flushing, N.Y., has devoted his energies to the Queens Chapter Youth Group of the American Red Cross in Greater New York since 1996.

Sept. 30, Charles and Gail Helfer, Takoma Park, Md., serves on the Park Police Friends Board, a nonprofit group that provides additional funds and in-kind services to supplement the Montgomery County Park Police. ♦

National Volunteer Week

April 27-May 3

www.pointsoflight.org/NVW/

USA Initiative



The Unity in the Spirit of America Initiative has inspired more than 4,000 community service projects performed in memory of people who died in the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Projects can be registered until March 1, 2003, at www.pointsoflight.org.



Learning to Serve

The Licking County (Ohio) Youth Grantmaking Council is far from the sites of the terrorist attacks, but it is connected at the heart with six people who died there.

The council, 18 students ages 11 to 22, makes grants to youth service groups in Licking County. The council asked the six recipients of this year's mini-grants to name their projects for Sept. 11 victims, chosen solely for their interest in children and young people. "It really gave a name to their project, put something behind it that 'we have to do an even better job on this'," says council adviser Lisa Varrosso.

Projects include building a park, visiting nursing homes, growing vegetables for a food bank and planting a butterfly garden.

Mobilizing Students

Claire Wightman, student body vice president at Principia College in Elsah, Ill., says, "I read that President Bush had requested that every American serve 4,000 hours to community and that every victim of Sept. 11 be honored by a service project."

So she enlisted about 360 students and faculty members from the college and Marquette and Alton high schools. Volunteers removed trash from a park, painted four houses, helped a Salvation Army on moving day, built a staircase at a Boy Scout camp and painted a map on an elementary school playground to honor 17 people from the Midwest who died in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. ♦

Michigan Sen. Debbie Stabenow, co-sponsor of the USA Act, and Virgil H. Carr, President and CEO, United Way Community Services, participated in a Detroit project to honor 16 people from Michigan who died in the Sept. 11 attacks. The George W. Romney Volunteer Center staff sponsored the cleanup at Capitol Park. ♦

