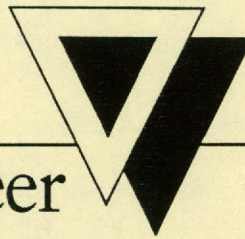


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volunteer DIMENSIONS

A monthly information and idea source for volunteer managers

Volunteer leadership is at a turning point: Part 1

What are the major concerns of today's coordinators of volunteer programs? In a world where changes have transformed the makeup of the volunteer population, heard most often is information about the changing demographics and increasing numbers of volunteers. But what about those responsible for managing these changing volunteers and meeting their expectations and needs? It is now recognized that what previously has worked for such a long time in terms of maintaining viable programs is no longer applicable, and research on what is working is sparse.

To help close that gap, *Nonprofit World* (Volume 9, No. 1, January/February 1991)

published results of a study with 16 coordinators of volunteer programs in Washington. The study identified their problems and concerns through in-depth telephone interviews conducted by Kitty Gray Carlsen. Carlsen, who teaches English in Japan, received her Master of Adult

and Continuing Education from Washington State University, where the research was performed. The research was presented at a conference of the Association of Voluntary Action Scholars. The information provides a theoretical basis for training volunteer administrators and improving volunteer-supported programs.

□ Respondents cited two main problems

The respondents, whose length of service ranged from one to nine years (average 3.5 years), cited two main problems confronting them in performing their jobs: the difficulty of balancing task and maintenance responsibilities and the lack of time. The amount of work expected coupled with a variety of job duties caused feelings of fragmentation and stress. As one coordinator com-

mented, "It is like running a 10-ring circus. You always have the feeling things are not getting done quite as well as they should because you can't focus on them."

□ Essential volunteer managers traits identified
Respondents identified the essential traits of volunteer managers which can be sorted into three main categories:

○ Flexibility

- Able to cope well with changes in plans
- Able to juggle several projects
- Able to "wear five hats" simultaneously
- Willing to work odd hours
- Deal well with lack of time

○ People Skills

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Patient | Open minded |
| Compassionate | Nurturing |
| Understanding | Caring |
| Good communicator | Warm and friendly |
| Tolerant | |

○ Commitment to Program

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| Enthusiastic | Creative |
| Tenacious | Imaginative |
| Strong willed | |

While the benefits of the job seem to be intrinsic in nature, in general, coordinators felt very positive about their profession, describing their job as wonderful, rewarding, remarkable, etc. Extrinsic rewards are limited and repeated drawbacks listed were low salaries, long hours and low status. All agreed that there is definitely more money to be made in the private sector, but the level of satisfaction for the job they do in the community is higher.

□ Main concerns facing coordinators

The three main concerns facing coordinators in the field today are professionalism, training and administrative and staff support.

○ Professionalism

Agreement exists among those surveyed that while professionalism is growing, there is still a need for increased professionalism within the field.

The three main concerns facing coordinators in the field today are professionalism, training and administrative and staff support.

A glance at what's inside

- Austin State School's Benjamin House to be dedicated on November 20, page 3
- Destination Dignity Month and 20th anniversary celebrated at Abilene Regional MHMR Center, page 4
- Abilene gives volunteers a "Big Country" welcome, page 5

continued page 2

Leadership at a turning point

continued from page 1

The growth is the result of increases in professional organizations, the need for volunteers and professional attitudes of volunteer managers about their jobs. Many believed that greater pay and training must occur in order to achieve professionalism.

oTraining

The lack of initial training for most coordinators creates a frustrating deficiency. Most cited that training is needed in basic business management, marketing, public relations and public speaking. Some respondents said that basic volunteer management training is helpful, while others said that the training currently available lacks depth or applicability.

oAdministrative and Staff Support

There was unanimous agreement that support from administrators and staff is essential for a successful volunteer program, but respondents consistently expressed surprise at how resistant some administrators and staff members are. Lack of understanding is seen as the cause of the resistance, and a need to educate administrators and staff is clear. Not understanding volunteers and what they can do for an organizations is the main part of the problem. Some of the comments:

"The administrators don't really recognize this job as a difficult position. They seem to feel that anyone who walks in the door is okay to volunteer."

"The staff I work with day by day supports the use of volunteers. But the rest of the staff look at me and scratch their heads as if to say, 'Why is she on the payroll?' You have to prove that volunteers are worth the time and energy and money. You have to constantly be a PR tool within your organization, not just outside your organization."

"The biggest surprise was the resistance on the part of the principals. They were very resistant to using the best practices" (of volunteer management).

"Well, the staff I work with has no experience or training in working with volunteers and has no knowledge of the potential of a volunteer program. I am fighting ignorance, really. They are just not aware of the issues involved in managing volunteers."

Volunteer DIMENSIONS is published monthly by the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation Volunteer Services and Public Information Office to serve as an information and idea source for managers of volunteer programs. Volunteer and council news are welcomed. Deadline is the 15th of each month. Direct your submissions or inquiries to Volunteer Services at Central Office, P.O. Box 12668, Austin, Texas 78711, or call (512) 465-4660, STS 824-4660, fax (512) 465-4836 or (512) 465-4711.

Dott Salli, Administrative Technician

Lael Byers, Assistant Director

Jane Koock, Assistant Director

Michele Glaze, Publications Coordinator

Peg Barry, Director, Volunteer Services and Public Information

oLearn to combat lack of understanding

How can this lack of understanding be combated? Most coordinators agreed that the coordinators themselves must believe strongly in their role, their programs and in the importance of solid management practices for volunteers within the organization. They also agreed that support of the volunteer program and respect for the volunteers will happen only when top administrators are supportive. This will lead to staff support. They suggested:

oHave someone at the very top of the organization support it philosophically. If you don't have that, it is not going to work.

oEducate administrators and staff about appropriate volunteer management practices.

oEducate directors of agencies about working with volunteers and what's involved in volunteer management. Administrators often come into agencies without really having any idea how to manage the limitless resources of volunteers. There are still people not aware of the volunteer procedures. They may be committed to volunteers but not informed of what volunteer management is all about.

Other suggestions included involving top administrators in a piece of the program to lend authority or clout to get the program accepted by staff. According to one respondent, "You need authority to get that kind of support. This year we got the assistant superintendent to be co-chair of the advisory council for our program. He is right at the top so it gave the program some authority. I am still coordinating it. I could have headed it up, but that wouldn't have given it the same kind of authority, respect and regard for it at the top."

Respondents cautioned new coordinators to pay attention to the attitudes of staff toward the volunteers, to move slowly when making changes and to know that the lack of support is not uncommon within the field. The lack of support is not surprising given the fact that volunteer management is a fairly new field. In addition, changing attitudes about volunteers may be difficult: administrators have to shift from seeing volunteers as icing or fluff to seeing them as an essential part of the organization. Also the fact that some coordinators entered the organization first as volunteers makes a mental shift necessary for staff. Seeing a person move from a volunteer to a professional paid staff member may be even more difficult for some.

Next issue--Volunteer Leadership is at a turning point, Part 2: How to be an agent of change

Austin State School VSC
**Benjamin House to be dedicated
on November 20**

The Benjamin House at Austin State School will be officially dedicated with open house, tours and a reception on November 20. The project included the renovation of a campus building into a home-like structure containing two separate, fully-furnished apartments. This "hospitality house" will make it possible for more families to visit family members who reside at the facility.

VSC NEWS

Benjamin House is dedicated to Gene Benjamin, who came to Austin State School as a volunteer in the early 1960s. Following 20 years of volunteer work on campus, in 1980 she became a teacher and later Director of Volunteer Services. In this position, she worked tirelessly for the well-being of clients and families until her death in January 1990. For more information about the house or the dedication, contact Lynn Denton, Director of Volunteer Services, at (512) 371-6048.

Mexia State School VSC
**Santa's workshop ensures residents
have a happy holiday**

Every Christmas the Mexia State School VSC opens Santa's Workshop on campus. The project ensures that each of the school's more than 700 residents has at least three gifts under the tree on Christmas morning. New Christmas cards, checks or new, unwrapped gifts are received and volunteers select, wrap and deliver the perfect gift for each person. The Christmas letter which the Council sends out each year includes a suggested gift list. Groups and individuals in the community are invited to wrap gifts or provide Christmas parties and other holiday activities for the school's residents and community services clients.

El Paso State Center VSC
Celebrity golf tourney slated

The Rance Mulliniks Celebrity Benefit Golf Tourney is scheduled for November 11 at the Coronado Country Club and the El Paso Country Club. Proceeds from the tournament will benefit El Paso State Center.

Tournament prizes will include a round trip airflight on American Airlines to Florida and Sea Escape Cruise to the Bahamas, a round trip airflight to Cancun with accommodations at the Hilton Hotel, roundtrip airplane tickets and accommodations in Las Vegas and other prizes to be announced.

Special event prizes include a hole-in-one contest with prizes of \$25,000 cash and a 3.5 carat-weight diamond tennis bracelet. In the closest-to-pin category, the winner will receive a round trip airflight to London with accommodations. The longest drive contest will award a roundtrip to Las Vegas with accommodations at the Riviera Hotel.

Tournament registration begins on Sunday, November 10, with play kicking-off on Monday, November 11. Final awards will be presented at an evening buffet and Chinese auction at the El Paso Country Club, with a thank you to all participants for supporting the Center. For more information, contact Kathy Higgins, Director of Volunteer Services, at (915) 779-9440.

Beaumont State Center VSC
Funds to benefit ECI program

Beaumont State Center VSC is raising funds for the Early Childhood Program's First Steps Laboratory School. The proposed new building will serve children with developmental delays who will be integrated with children from the community for joint learning opportunities. To date, one-third of the proposed cost has been raised with \$30,000 in contributions and \$50,000 in pledge from the first grant request.

Welcome Aboard!

Dott Salli has joined the Volunteer Services staff as Administrative Technician. Dott can be reached at STS 824-4660.

Amarillo State Center
Richardson appointed as coordinator

Debi Richardson has been appointed Coordinator of Volunteer Services and Public Information Officer for Amarillo State Center. She has been working at the Center in Case Management. She began her new responsibilities on November 1.

FROM THE FACILITIES

Beaumont State Center
Newsletter premieres

Beaumont State Center's first newsletter, *Center Stage*, has premiered.

"We solicited name ideas from the staff," said Karen McKinney, Director, Volunteer Services.

Mary Jo McCowan, BSC Dietitian, came up with the winning name and for her efforts received a complimentary dinner for two.

Andrews Center, Tyler
Center celebrates name change

Andrews Center is the new name of the former MHMR Regional Center of East Texas. The name change was celebrated with an open house, guided tours and handouts.

Gulf Coast Center, Galveston
Dignity walk helps celebrate month

An estimated 400 people participated in "Walk For Dignity" to celebrate Destination Dignity Month, according to Theresa Haak, Public Information Officer, Gulf Coast Center. Participants included staff, persons with disabilities, local advocacy groups and state and county officials who walked two miles along the beach to the San Luis Pass Bridge. A ceremony followed in which Galveston County Judge Ray

Holbrook and Brazoria County Judge Jim Phillips read and signed a proclamation declaring "Destination Dignity" month in both counties.

These original thoughts from Ken Kuzmeskas, Island House Receptionist, Success Club member, artist and former Gulf Coast Center consumer convey the real essence of Destination Dignity.

Destination Dignity

*Most people are quite all right,
but some of us have a disabled plight.
Real mental and emotional concerns
are with us as the world turns.
We would like to do the most and
not let living issues coast.
High goals are set, but with a
handicap these are hardly met.
How do we reach destination dignity,
and be all that we can be?
We creep, crawl, walk and run.
This is how the goal is won.
We can't be too backward or dumb,
for we shall overcome.*

Workshop on handling anger offered

Is dealing with emotional employees or volunteers part of your job? Learn skills in a one-day seminar which can be used the next time anger threatens to undermine your department's teamwork and productivity. "How To Handle Employee Anger and Emotions" costs \$99 and is available at sites across the state. Topics included: easing department pressures, feeling comfortable dealing with employees' emotions, controlling your own emotions, supporting employees without getting too personal, and dealing with your boss. Dates in Texas are: Dallas, December 3; San Antonio, December 4; Houston, December 5. To register, call 1 (800) 255-4141 or (913) 451-2900.

Abilene Regional MHMR Center
Destination Dignity Month and 20th anniversary celebrated

The Abilene Regional MHMR Center celebrated their 20th anniversary and Destination Dignity Month with a dedication of new facilities. Participating in the ceremonies were legislators, area officials and TXMHMR Commissioner Dennis Jones. Betty Hardwick, Chair of the Board and President of the Texas Council of Community MHMR Centers, served as master of ceremonies.

The theme for the celebration was "Teamwork: A Texas Tradition." MHMR clients, assisted by the Abilene Chamber of Commerce Redcoats, jointly cut the ribbon for the new facilities.

The first annual Destination Dignity Award was presented to KTAB-TV for outstanding media coverage to promote dignity and quality of life for persons with mental disabilities. Reporter Lori Gordon was recognized for a five-part series, "A Different Drummer," which detailed the Providership Program.

Robbye Plummer, Coordinator, Volunteer Services and Public Information Officer for the Center, was saluted by the *Abilene Reporter-News*. Robbye conceived the idea for Destination Dignity Month, which was adopted statewide, and received a proclamation by the Governor.

In recognition of the Center's anniversary and new facilities, Robbye wrote a supplement to the *Abilene Reporter-News* which was inserted in every Sunday newspaper. The supplement chronicles 20 years of service with photographs and text.

1991 fall conference calendar

Second Annual Helen Farabee Conference
November 4-5, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Austin
Contact Norma Weitzel, (512) 465-4571 or
STS 824-4837

Public Information Officer Inservice
November 6-7, Sheraton Austin Hotel
Contact Jane Kooock, (512) 465-4660

Volunteer Services Core Group Meeting
November 8, Sheraton Austin Hotel
Atrium Board Room 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p. m.

Volunteer Management Program, Third Level
November 11-15
University of Colorado at Boulder
Contact Gwen Ritter, (303) 492-5151

Executive Women in Texas Government
Annual Professional Development Conference
November 18, Stouffer Hotel, Austin
Contact EWTG office, (512) 261-3293

CENTER VIEWS

Abilene gives volunteers a "Big Country" welcome

The Volunteer Services State Council's 33rd Fall Annual Membership Meeting was held in Abilene at the Embassy Suites Hotel.

More than 246 volunteers and staff from across the state attended the meeting. Kudos and thanks go to Abilene State School's Volunteer Services Council, who hosted the three-day event and provided "big country" style hospitality and entertainment.

VSSC NEWS

□ Abilene VSC goes the extra mile

"The Abilene VSC's dedication and extraordinary efforts to make the meeting a success will be long remembered and appreciated," said Jane Kooch, Assistant Director, Volunteer Services, TXMHMR. "The Council volunteers were on hand to provide every kind of thoughtful service and clever detail imaginable for participants from chauffeuring to cooking a scrumptious barbecue for 200! Never did a group of special people appear to enjoy 'working' more than these exceptional volunteers."

In addition, thanks go to the Abilene State School staff for their support and hard work. In particular, Joy Ellinger, Director of Public Affairs; Ollie Hale, Director of Volunteer Activities; and Bill Waddill, Superintendent, are to be congratulated.

□ Workshops address volunteer issues

Marlene Wilson, international volunteer management leader, trainer and author, was the keynote speaker for the meeting.

"Staying Creative in a Hectic World" was the topic of the address which included excerpts from

San Antonio State Hospital

SASH wins Wade plaque

The 19th annual David Wade plaque was awarded to San Antonio State Hospital for bringing the largest number of volunteers the greatest distance to the Volunteer Services State Council Fall Meeting.

The award was created by David Wade, MD, to establish what he called some "friendly competition" and encouragement to volunteers to attend the annual VSSC membership meeting. Dr. Wade, former Vice Chair for Region V, is also a former TXMHMR Commissioner.

SASH, who brought 13 volunteers, received a permanent mini-plaque and a traveling large plaque commemorating their achievement. Runners-up include: 1st - San Antonio State School; 2nd - Laredo State Center; 3rd - Kerrville State Hospital; 4th - Big Spring State Hospital; 5th - Brenham State School; 6th - El Paso State Center; 7th - Terrell State Hospital.

her latest book, *You Can Make A Difference*. Her workshop, "Effectively Managing Your Time and Your Stress Creatively," was one of six concurrent workshops offered. Other workshops offered by guest presenters included "Direct Mail Fund Raising," "Pet Therapy," "Board of Directors Training," "Families Project" and "Continuous Quality Improvement." Two additional concurrent workshops offered were "Families Conference" and "The Family Center: A Year of Caring" (Terrell State Hospital).

□ New executive committee members elected

New VSSC Executive Committee members are Gene Heatly, Chairman, Vernon; Joe Rapier, Vice Chairman Region I, Lubbock; Reg Tomblin, Vice Chairman Region II, Terrell; Glory Hopkins, Vice Chairman Region III, Richmond; R. Coke Mills, Vice Chairman Region IV, Waco; Al Shepperd, Vice Chairman Region V, Hunt; Joy Wright, Secretary, Tyler; John Murray, Treasurer, Terrell. Chairman Heatly appointed John Caldwell, Jr. of San Angelo as Legislative Chairman.

The meeting concluded with a Chairman's Luncheon and a final round of thanks to the many people who contributed their talents and time.

Receiving special recognition was Lael Byers, Assistant Director of Volunteer Services at Central Office, who was presented a plaque from the volunteers around the state. Lael was instrumental in coordinating the three-day statewide meeting.

The 34th Annual Fall Meeting will be hosted by the El Paso State Center VSC and is scheduled in El Paso October 2-4, 1992.

Tarrant County MHMR

Tarrant County Volunteer Services Council is first community MHMR center to join VSSC

The Volunteer Services Council for Tarrant County MHMR Services in Fort Worth is the first community MHMR center to join the Volunteer Services State Council. Richard E. Garnett, PhD, and Chair of the Council, attended the VSSC fall membership meeting in Abilene representing the Council. The Council was established in 1984 and actively pursues fund-raising efforts for the Center.

Successful fund-raising ventures included the Training Building, the annual Octoberfest booth at the Tarrant County Convention Center, the annual Glowworm Golf Tournament and the annual motorcycle toy run.

Finding needed volunteers

About one out of every five people older than 16 served as volunteers in the United States in 1989. To help you find volunteers, you might want to consider the following information:

-**Women** (22 percent) volunteered more than men (19 percent)

-**Thirty-one** percent of women between ages 35 and 44 worked as volunteers. Eighteen percent of those 65 and over were volunteers, and 13 percent under age 25 served as volunteers.

-**Married** men and women served as volunteers more than those who were not married.

-**Four** of every 10 college graduates age 25 or over participated in unpaid volunteer work. Fewer than 10 percent of high school dropouts did.

-**People** with incomes more than \$50,000 were about three times as likely to volunteer as those whose incomes were under \$10,000.

-**Most** volunteers worked fewer than five hours per week but did so on a regular basis.

-**Black** and Hispanic volunteers and those age 65 or over devoted more hours a week to volunteer activities than other ethnic groups did.

Source: Howard V. Hayghe, writing in Monthly Labor Review, cited in Speaker's Digest, Lime Rock Press Inc., 80 Washinee St., Salisbury, CT 06068

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Volunteer DIMENSIONS
TXMHMR Volunteer Services
P.O. Box 12668
Austin, Texas 78711-2668

Someone once observed that a little kindness from person to person is better than a vast love of mankind.

from *Survival Skills for Managers*
by Marlene Wilson