

WHAT MAKES THE DIRECTOR OF VOLUNTEERS "DIFFERENT"?

- ** The DoV is one of the few members of the staff with responsibility both inside and outside the organization. S/he must have constant contact with the public, especially in order to recruit new volunteers. But s/he must also be in continuous touch with the day-to-day work of the facility, in order to identify new needs for volunteers.
- ** S/he must be aware of the entire organization...since volunteers are assigned everywhere.
- ** Rarely does anyone else in the organization know how volunteers are managed. The DoV is the "in-house expert" on volunteers. This is a lonely position, since no one else on the staff shares this profession (other professionals have in-house colleagues).
- ** The DoV must deal with staff at all levels in order to determine volunteer assignments and provide liaison supervision. However, s/he is a department head. This two-edged sword makes some staff feel threatened and others feel superior.
- ** While the Volunteer Department appears on paper to be the smallest unit in the facility (in terms of payroll), the DoV actually supervises more people than any other administrator except the CEO.
- ** No one else coordinates so many people with so many backgrounds and so many schedules.
- ** The demands of the DoV job require odd hours...evening interviews, weekend events, breakfast speeches.
- ** The DoV has a triple constituency:
 - S/he must be responsive to and supportive of the organization.
 - S/he must always consider client/patient needs.
 - S/he must represent the volunteer perspective.The latter is special and sometimes places the DoV into tension with the rest of the organization. Yet, if the DoV is doing his/her job right, this tension is sometimes unavoidable.

The DoV facilitates the involvement of volunteers...s/he does not "control" volunteers.
- ** The DoV is the only person who can dream about new projects and not have to ask: "how will we pay for this?"
- ** The DoV acts as in-house advocate for volunteers.