

**Certification in**  
**Volunteer Administration Program**



ASSOCIATION FOR VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION  
P.O. Box 4584  
Boulder, Colorado 80306  
(303)497-0238

CERTIFICATION PROGRAM  
CVA--CERTIFIED IN VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION

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may not be reproduced.

# 3280

The program and materials were developed by members  
of the Professional Development Committee.

Rhoda White, Chair

Connie Cheren, MSW

Joanne Patton

Mark E. Cheren, Ed.D.

Page Bristow, Ph.D.

Anne Hayden

Winifred Brown

Sarah Jane Rehnberg, Ph.D.

Sandra Mintz, CVA



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Revised 1985

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## ASSOCIATION FOR VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION

P.O. Box 4584 • Boulder, Colorado 80306 • (303) 497-0238

Dear Applicant,

By acquiring this packet of information, you have taken the first step in a process through which you may pursue certification in volunteer administration. The Performance-Based Certification Program, CVA (Certified in Volunteer Administration), is a professional credential in volunteer administration which is sponsored by the Association for Volunteer Administration.

The materials you have received will enable you to evaluate your performance skills in accordance with a list of criteria which has been deemed necessary for satisfactory administration of volunteer programs. When you have evaluated your skills and found them to be satisfactory or above and have completed two or more years of volunteer administration, you may submit the enclosed application form. An Assessment Review Panel will evaluate your application, and the accompanying materials, and advise you of your readiness to be accepted into the Certification process.

The designers, developers, and deliverers of the AVA Certification Program look forward to your participation. As you read the enclosed materials, remember that the more we increase our knowledge, refine our skills, and uplift our standards of performance, the stronger and more effective our shared field of volunteer administration becomes. We are grateful for your collegueship in this endeavor.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Winifred L. Brown'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with some loops and flourishes.

Winifred L. Brown, CVA  
Chair, Professional Development Committee

WB:mun  
3/87

### NATIONAL AFFILIATES

American Red Cross  
Association of Junior Leagues, Inc.  
Camp Fire, Inc.

Literacy Volunteers of America  
Lutheran Brotherhood  
National Council of Jewish Women  
Prison Fellowship Ministries  
The Salvation Army

United Way of America  
VOLUNTEER: The National Center  
Young Men's Christian Association

## AVA Certification Application Form

Packet # \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Last \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_ M.I. \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Workshop Attended \_\_\_\_\_

Self-initiating candidate \_\_\_\_\_

Length of Time in Field of Volunteerism (Years)

Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Administrator (Salaried and nonsalaried) \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Volunteers Involved in Your Program Per Year \_\_\_\_\_ New \_\_\_\_\_ Ongoing

Size of Budget in Your Control \_\_\_\_\_ Number of staff supervised \_\_\_\_\_

**WORK HISTORY:** (List both salaried and related volunteer experience.)  
 Start with present position and work backward. You  
 may use additional pages as necessary. Please do not  
 submit a standard resume.

Organization	Position	Address	Major Responsibility	Length of Time	Supervisor

WORK HISTORY (cont'd)

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Major Responsibility</u>	<u>Length of Time</u>	<u>Supervisor</u>
---------------------	-----------------	----------------	-----------------------------	-----------------------	-------------------

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

Highest formal education attained \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Training related directly to volunteerism \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

LIABILITY RELEASE STATEMENT (signature required of all applicants):

The undersigned understands that the AVA certification process is a voluntary one, and that participation in or completion of this process will not guarantee a candidate certification. Applicants not found acceptable as candidates or candidates denied certification shall be notified in writing by the Certification Assessment Panel, with suggestions to assist their successful fulfillment of certification requirements in the future. All assessment reviews are understood to be confidential and the undersigned agrees that neither AVA, its officers, members, nor other persons involved in the certification process shall be held liable for the failure of any applicant to achieve certification.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Portfolio Review Form

Please Type or Print Packet Registration # \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Last \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_ M.I. \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Workshop Attended \_\_\_\_\_

Self-initiating candidate \_\_\_\_\_

Submit Completed Portfolio for Evaluation. Write Packet Registration # on each page.  
(Original and 4 copies)

Check as applicable and submit fee to AVA, P.O. Box 4584, Boulder CO 80306. (Write  
packet registration # on your check.)

\_\_\_\_\_ AVA Member \$50

\_\_\_\_\_ Member of AVA Affiliate Organization\* \$50

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of organization

\_\_\_\_\_ Non-AVA Member \$50

\* Enclose copy of proof verifying current membership status, i.e., membership card,  
roster, AVA membership number, etc.

MEMBERS OF LOCAL CHAPTERS OF NATIONAL AFFILIATES ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR  
AFFILIATE MEMBER BENEFITS UNLESS THE CHAPTER IS INDEPENDENTLY  
AFFILIATED WITH AVA.

I fully understand that my signature verifies that I performed the work as stated; that I  
have presented my experiences accurately and honestly to the best of my ability; and  
that I am sole author of this portfolio. I understand that falsification or  
misrepresentation are grounds for the denial or revocation of certification.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

CHAPTER 1: THE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

**Registration Information and Fees**

**Process Steps**

1. **Order Certification Packet from AVA Office.** Fee: \$25.

A numbered registered packet will be sent. Included will be materials for self-assessment. To pursue certification, a minimum of 75% of the specified performance criteria should be demonstrated.

2. **Attend a Certification Workshop.**

Fee:	<u>AVA Member</u>	<u>Affiliate Member</u>	<u>Non-AVA Member</u>
	\$35	\$35	\$35

Purchase of packet and preparation of materials are prerequisite for attendance. Complete self-assessment checklist and draft of requested narratives for review and discussion. For information about scheduled Certification Workshops contact Certification Liaison or AVA office.

3. **Apply to Enter the Certification Process.**

Fee:	<u>AVA Member</u>	<u>Affiliate Member</u>	<u>Non-AVA Member</u>
	\$100	\$190	\$290

Send completed application, self-assessment checklist, revised narratives and payment to AVA office. Materials will be reviewed by the Application Review Panel for approval.

4. **Develop a Portfolio.**

Upon acceptance as a candidate, prepare a portfolio. Having an adviser or peer study group is recommended. Instruction materials are distributed at workshop.

5. **Portfolio Review. Send Completed Portfolio for Evaluation.**

Fee:	<u>AVA Member</u>	<u>Affiliate Member</u>	<u>Non-AVA Member</u>
	\$50	\$50	\$50

Certification Assessment Review Panel will review the portfolio.

6. **Provide Documentation and Verification.**

Certification Assessment Review Panel may request specific items to verify performance. Completion of a case study may also be requested.

7. **Receive Notification of Decision.**

Written comments will accompany notification of acceptance or non-acceptance by the Certification Assessment Review Panel.



**INDICATE YOUR PACKET NUMBER ON ALL CORRESPONDENCE.**

<b><u>Certification Fee Schedule</u></b>	<b><u>AVA Member</u></b>	<b><u>Affiliate Member</u></b>	<b><u>Non-AVA Member</u></b>
Certification Packet	\$25	\$25	\$25
Certification Workshop	\$35	\$35	\$35
Self-Initiating Packet	\$35	\$45	\$55
Application Fee	\$100	\$190	\$290
Portfolio Review	\$50	\$50	\$50
Resubmission Fee	\$30	\$42	\$60

AVA Membership - Annual \$75 - All fees payable in U.S. funds.

**Refund Policy:**

1. Should an affiliate or non-member elect to purchase an individual active membership in AVA, all certification fees subsequent to or concurrent with the date of membership will be reduced to the AVA member rate.
2. Should the Certification Assessment Review Panel find the applicant not qualified to enter the certification process, the application fee, less \$10 will be refunded. The applicant may reapply at a later date when qualification can be met. Full fee will be charged for reapplication.
3. No refund will be granted for unsuccessful completion after final portfolio submission.

THE AVA CERTIFICATION PROCESS IS A VOLUNTARY ONE, PARTICIPATION IN OR COMPLETION OF THIS PROCESS DOES NOT GUARANTEE A CANDIDATE CERTIFICATION.

## Performance-Based Certification in Volunteer Administration

Sarah Jane Rehnborg, PhD, and Mark Eaton Cheren, EdD

Journal of Volunteer Administration—Summer 1983

### BEYOND COMPETENCE: PERFORMANCE-BASED CERTIFICATION

Historically, the way in which judgments have been made about the ability of professionals to practice their professions has come full circle. Before professional associations and states became enmeshed in mutually reinforcing relationships concerned with certifying and licensing professionals, those preparing to become part of an established profession apprenticed themselves to individual practitioners. Helping established practitioners and working alongside them in the field, it was easy for these apprentices to have their performance, that is, how well they actually worked in that field, evaluated.

But as professions became more technical and the knowledge needed for satisfactory performance increased, more time and effort with apprentices was required in order to provide them with the knowledge necessary for sound practice. As the number of people seeking such training also began to increase dramatically, the use of schools (learning factories) in addition to or instead of extended apprenticeships became the norm. Increasingly, certification was linked to degrees and tests that measured knowledge and skills abstracted from the "real world" of professional practice.

As a result, an honors graduate from a business school would often be automatically deemed competent as a manager by a prospective employer solely on the basis of academic accomplishment. Knowledge is an essential part of an individual's ability to perform; however, it is far from the whole picture. Knowing or knowledge can help in performance or doing, but it cannot be substituted for the action (the doing), itself.

The demand for relevance and client empowerment in the late sixties and early seventies, and an emphasis on accountability and productivity in the late seventies and early eighties, have combined to motivate a push toward competence. Many educational programs sponsored by schools, corporations, and professional groups are now competency-based programs. What this means is that programs created to facilitate new learning and the development of competence are designed and described in terms of outcomes for the learner, rather than in terms of teaching activities or of curriculum to be transmitted.

The movement toward competence has certainly been a step in the right direction. With this trend has come increased emphasis on using skill and knowledge in concert, and an acknowledgment that a balance of theory to practice may well enhance professional performance.

The dictionary defines "competence" as being capable, sufficient and able; having the requisite skills, abilities, or qualities. The competence of a professional is judged by his or her ability to perform the functions and tasks of the job. If the person can meet or surpass the performance standards of a particular position, the person generally is considered to be competent (Klemp, 1979).

The problem is that while the nature and phrasing of learning objectives and methods used in the classroom have been changing, most formal educational programs are still abstracted from the real world of professional practice. At best, an individual's ability to perform the functions and tasks of the job is evaluated in the classroom in a simulation of some kind. Yet we all know that actually performing functions and tasks in a real work setting is quite another situation. It is while discharging professional responsibilities that an individual's ability to use an area of competence appropriately may display itself or break down.

What this points to is the need to continue the circular trend in certification methodology back to the place it all started, with people demonstrating professional competencies in the role of a practicing professional. In the field of volunteer administration, most people develop their competencies outside of the formal classroom. This is true because peer coaching and collaborative learning are more common in our field than in most working environments and because formal programs of preparation have been slow to develop. Furthermore, open access to all is part of how the field defines itself. These very characteristics actually make volunteer administration an ideal profession in which to introduce the use of the demonstration of satisfactory performance as a working professional to prove one is qualified to be certified, rather than simulated demonstrations of competence or the completion of paper and pencil tests.

#### WHAT MAKES A COMPETENT PROFESSIONAL?

In an analysis of several occupational groups to determine what makes a competent professional, Klemp (1979) identified some interesting findings. Being willing and able to learn, Klemp found, was more important to competent professional performance than the actual amount of knowledge held by the professional:

It is not the acquisition of knowledge or even the use of knowledge that distinguished the outstanding performer, but rather the cognitive skills that are exercised and developed in the process of knowledge

acquisition and use that constitute occupational competence. In other words, the information processing skills related to learning, recall, and forgetting are not so important to success as the conceptual skills that enable one to bring order to the information chaos that characterizes one's everyday environment. (p. 2)

Klemp went on to identify three main cognitive skills related to competent performance in a wide array of occupations:

1. The ability to see broad thematic consistencies in diverse information and the ability to organize and communicate both those consistencies and differences.
2. The ability to conceptualize the many sides of a controversial issue; the ability to understand the underlying issues and the many perspectives on it, and to resolve the conflict for him/herself and other people.
3. The ability to learn from experience.

Klemp's findings are critical to all professionals, not only to volunteer administrators. He has experimentally verified what has long seemed intuitively apparent to the astute observer: the competent professional is one who can make sense out of information, conceptualize, and learn from experience. But the progression from the identification of the "true" marks of a competent professional, to means and methods of assessing an individual's relative ability in these cognitive areas has only just begun.

Paper and pencil tests have long been criticized for inadequately measuring the richness of thinking and behaving. Assessment by direct observation is difficult to implement due to expense and control factors. The subjective qualities of "common sense," ability to "relate well to people," to "conceptualize," and to "learn from experience" are commonly outside of the range of currently available testing devices.

Yet, just because our technology of ability measurement is not yet refined enough to get at these larger, more consequential characteristics of people functioning well in their professional environment, it does not mean we must abandon all attempts to evaluate performance. Until more refined techniques are available, the compilation of a portfolio for documenting professional skills is one alternative currently available.

Assembling a portfolio requires that the applicant provide evidence of skill through self-critical descriptions (narratives) of projects he or she has administered. In such narratives, the applicant describes the aspects of the role of a volunteer administrator which he or she has played, what he or she did, why, and what results were generated by the effort. Actual products demonstrating these results that could be supplied, if requested, are identified.

Letters or statements of independent evaluation and verification could also be supplied, if requested.

As we have seen, analyzing one's skills and citing documentation to verify the application of these abilities is a key ingredient in learning from experience. The Performance-Based Certification Program offers the applicant a structured format for demonstrating these basic skills of professional competence. It is the process of compiling a portfolio around key competencies in volunteer administration that is the crux of this new certification program.

COMPONENTS OF THE NEW CERTIFICATION PROGRAM  
(Edited by S. J. Rehnberg, PhD—5/87)

The Association for Volunteer Administration's performance-based model for professional credentialing allows the prospective candidate to engage in a number of exciting and professionally rewarding experiences. Here are a few.

Self-Assessment

Reviewing and assessing one's professional skills and abilities provides the cornerstone for the Certification program. Utilizing the competencies and performance criteria established by AVA as necessary for satisfactory volunteer administration, the administrator interested in certification rates him or herself according to an established scale. In order to progress with the Certification program, a specified score suggesting moderate breadth of experience must be achieved. This ensures the prospective candidate with a reasonable chance of success—an important "hedge" before one undertakes this process.

Not achieving the necessary score, however does NOT constitute failure in any way. Rather, the AVA competency checklists can become the administrator's guide for continuing development. Sorting through workshop and course offerings, books, and conference experiences available in the field can be nothing short of confusing. With the checklist as a guide, it is easy to identify areas where additional development is needed, either to enhance existing strengths or to respond to felt deficiencies. The developing administrator can utilize this initial self-assessment experience to commence a series of more thoughtful continuing professional development planning efforts.

It is likely that an increasing number of offerings treating these topics will be available as colleges and universities begin using the AVA competencies and performance criteria as a significant input to the curriculum development work for those preparing for this and related fields.

### Application and Workshop

Individuals interested in pursuing certification prepare an application which is submitted to AVA for review. Potential applicants attend a workshop where they are introduced to the Program. Following the workshop, an application is completed which includes a sample performance narrative along with a preliminary statement of philosophy. The application and appropriate fee are forwarded to AVA.

### Performance Narratives

To verify that the certification candidate has the skills and experiences claimed on the competency checklists, those accepted as candidates for certification are asked to put together a portfolio, the main component of which is a series of managerial and behavioral performance narratives. Each narrative requires that the candidate recount an actual work situation where various competencies were displayed. The narrative explains what the administrator did to handle the situation and why, and the outcomes or results of her or his work. To verify the authenticity of the narrative, the candidate identifies persons who could attest to the job done and/or the products that were developed in the course of the experience, such as reports, training manuals, and brochures. Reviewing these narratives, experienced professionals are able to make a reasonable judgment concerning the quality of a candidate's performance.

Based on the combined experiences of pilot and field test candidates, this writing exercise has proved to be an enormously profitable learning experience in itself, and a guide for improved practice. Experiences of success as well as more limited results were shared with equal profit.

### Advisement

For some candidates, the opportunity to work with more experienced administrators in a mentoring relationship or to develop and work with a peer support group, is an additional benefit of the process.

The conversation is expanded in one-to-one and small group meetings with other candidates and mentors. In fact, through this series of conversations between candidates and their mentors and among candidates, a dialogue centered around professional standards evolves. It is in just such conversations that some of the most serious, new-knowledge-creating debates concerning professional standards and ethics for our field can emerge.

Such local dialogues can and should become local platforms where we share and reflect on our individual professional experiences and through which we are all able to continually work to improve our field. Many new ideas should be born here. This will not be the only platform for such things, of

course, but it will be a significant one, with a particular flavor of its own. And choosing to relate to these local certification conversations in this way should make the process of supporting candidates through certification much more rewarding for each of us and more productive for our profession.

### External Assessment

To provide internal standardization and verification for the certification process itself, several review points are built into the Program. The first assessment, of course, is the candidate's own. But this is added to in the feedback, which is to say the external assessment, that comes from advisors, mentioned above, informally all along the way and more formally, in writing, at the mid and end points (typically 4-6 months and then 9-12 months after application).

In the final stage of the process, the candidate is asked to do a case analysis and response. The candidate receives an account of a situation confronting an administrator and is asked to bring his or her skills to bear in analyzing the case and suggesting possible courses of action, including the recommendation of a preferred course of action and a rationale for that recommendation. This case analysis and response and the candidate's completed portfolio, together with any verifying evidence requested, are then evaluated by the AVA Panel of Assessment. It is on this basis that a determination of whether or not to certify the candidate is made.

All the portfolios are assessed against the same set of standards, those established and published by AVA in its literature. This should assure a uniformity of standards and that some meaningful, consistent status is attached to the award of CVA: Certified in Volunteer Administration.

### QUESTIONS ABOUT CERTIFICATION

Under AVA's Professional Development Committee, chaired by an AVA Board member, there are a number of committees, including the Certification Committee. At the local level, questions about certification should be directed to your Certification Liaison. If you have difficulty contacting your Regional Certification Liaison, the AVA Office in Boulder is available to assist you.

One of the important challenges for the Certification Program is to work in harmony with the AVA regional structure. By decentralizing the delivery system, the program gains strength and the regions are given appropriate responsibilities.

### SPONSORSHIP AND COOPERATION

A local certification effort may be initiated by a local group of volunteer administrators, by an AVA affiliate, or by an AVA regional

organization. While a local college or university can act as a cooperating partner, the initiative and the ultimate responsibility for local certification efforts must always rest with one or more of these professional groups.

There are two ways of pursuing certification: either through participation in an Introduction to Certification Workshop; or through a self-initiated process, where the candidate is to a significant extent on his or her own. The recommended way of pursuing certification is to attend a workshop. The advantage is an organized structure to provide information and support.

#### THE VALUE OF PERFORMANCE-BASED CERTIFICATION

We have already begun to detect signs of the kind of impact this program can have on the field and for the individual practitioner. Several practitioners of volunteer administration in hospitals have indicated that this should bolster their requests for salaries more appropriate to their level of competence. Experienced professionals are already beginning to take less experienced members of the profession on in a mentoring role to help them prepare for application for certification under this new program. Experience tells us we can expect a whole new quality of dialogue and a whole new level of participation in the local conversation about: (1) the nature of this profession; (2) what constitutes sound professional practice; and (3) what we want to establish as appropriate professional standards in our field.



**REFERENCES**

- Klemp, G. O. "Identifying, Measuring, and Integrating Competence." New Directions for Experiential Learning, 1979, 3, 41-52.
- Rehnborg, Sarah Jane. "Assessing Skills as a Volunteer Administrator: A New Approach to Certification." Volunteer Administration, Vol. XII, No. 3, Fall 1979, 10-17.

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Dr. Sarah Jane Rehnborg is a past President of the AVA, having served the Association from 1979-1981. Mark Eaton Cheren is a consultant in human resource development and volunteerism. This paper was published in The Journal of Volunteer Administration, Summer 1983, 50-56.

### Self-Initiated Candidate

A person who wishes to proceed with the Certification Process without the benefit of a workshop must take the following steps.

1. Purchase packet - Preparation for Certification from AVA. - \$25. (P.O. Box 4584, Boulder CO 80306)
2. Purchase workbook - The Self-Initiated Candidate from AVA.
3. Complete the Self-Assessment Checklist and determine if you meet the criteria.
4. Follow all directions for Applying for Certification in the packet Preparation for Certification.
5. In submitting application and materials include a letter stating why you wish to be a self-initiated candidate.
6. You will be notified in writing if you have been accepted as a candidate.
7. If you should decide to attend a workshop at a later date after receiving the Self-Initiated Candidate Workbook you will be required to pay full workshop costs in accordance with fee schedule.
8. It is strongly recommended that self-initiated candidates seek a mentor or a peer support group to assist in the portfolio development process. AVA is available to assist you in this phase. Call the AVA office (303) 497-0238 for additional information.

IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT COMPLETION OF THE PORTFOLIO PROCESS AND FULL PAYMENT OF FEES DOES NOT GUARANTEE CERTIFICATION. IT IS AGREED THAT NEITHER AVA, ITS OFFICERS, MEMBERS, NOR OTHER PERSONS INVOLVED IN THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS SHALL BE HELD LIABLE FOR THE FAILURE OF ANY APPLICANT TO ACHIEVE CERTIFICATION.

#### Self-Initiated Candidate Workbook Fees:

AVA member \$35  
 Affiliate member \$40  
 Non-member \$50

CHAPTER 2: THE APPLICATION PROCESS**Applying for Certification Checklist**

You should submit an application at this point only if you have:

- A. at least 2 years of full-time experience (or the equivalent) as a volunteer program administrator;
- B. assessed your competence level at S, G or O on at least 75% of the performance criteria on the self-assessment checklist;
- C. prepared in triplicate:
  - \_\_\_ 1. Completed application form - p. 15
  - \_\_\_ 2. Self-Assessment Checklist Scoring Sheet and Summary Sheet - p. 34, 35
  - \_\_\_ 3. Philosophy of Volunteerism Statement 200 words or less - p. 36
  - \_\_\_ 4. Management Narrative 1000 words or less - p. 36
  - \_\_\_ 5. Payment form with check made payable to "AVA Certification"

To file the application for certification send three copies of items in step C with a check payable in U.S. funds to: AVA Certification, P.O. Box 4584, Boulder, CO 80306.

**Application Fees:**

AVA member \$100

Affiliate member \$190

Non-member \$290

- \* Enclose copy of proof verifying current membership status, i.e., membership card, roster, etc.

Should an affiliate or non-member elect to purchase an individual active membership in AVA, all certification fees subsequent to or concurrent with the date of membership will be reduced to the member rate (see fee schedule).

**National Affiliates**

**LOCAL CHAPTERS OF NATIONAL AFFILIATES ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR AFFILIATE MEMBER BENEFITS UNLESS THE CHAPTER IS INDEPENDENTLY AFFILIATED WITH AVA.**

AVA Certification Application Form

Packet # \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Last \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_ M.I. \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Workshop Attended \_\_\_\_\_

Self-initiating candidate \_\_\_\_\_

Length of Time in Field of Volunteerism (Years)

Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Administrator (Salaried and nonsalaried) \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Volunteers Involved in Your Program Per Year \_\_\_\_\_ New \_\_\_\_\_ Ongoing

Size of Budget in Your Control \_\_\_\_\_ Number of staff supervised \_\_\_\_\_

WORK HISTORY: (List both salaried and related volunteer experience.)  
Start with present position and work backward. You may use additional pages as necessary. Please do not submit a standard resume.

Organization	Position	Address	Major Responsibility	Length of Time	Supervisor

WORK HISTORY (cont'd)

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Major Responsibility</u>	<u>Length of Time</u>	<u>Supervisor</u>
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EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

Highest formal education attained \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Training related directly to volunteerism \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

LIABILITY RELEASE STATEMENT (signature required of all applicants):

The undersigned understands that the AVA certification process is a voluntary one, and that participation in or completion of this process will not guarantee a candidate certification. Applicants not found acceptable as candidates or candidates denied certification shall be notified in writing by the Certification Assessment Panel, with suggestions to assist their successful fulfillment of certification requirements in the future. All assessment reviews are understood to be confidential and the undersigned agrees that neither AVA, its officers, members, nor other persons involved in the certification process shall be held liable for the failure of any applicant to achieve certification.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Self-Assessment Checklist  
for  
The AVA Performance-Based Assessment Program  
for  
Certification in Volunteer Administration**

**INTRODUCTION**

This checklist contains the competencies and performance criteria acknowledged by the Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA) as necessary for satisfactory performance in volunteer administration. Assessing yourself on this very thorough checklist will provide you with a clear and detailed picture of your level of ability in the many skill areas required of a volunteer administrator.

These competencies and performance criteria are central to the AVA Performance-Based Assessment Program for Certification in Volunteer Administration. Completing this checklist is the first step in the certification process. To formally enter the certification program, it will be necessary to achieve a rating of "S" or above in 75% of the performance criteria listed.

**DIRECTIONS**

Using the Self-Assessment Rating Scale, rate yourself on each of the performance criteria listed. (Note that the performance criteria are the statements in lower case letters.)

- NK = no knowledge; haven't done
- SK = some knowledge, but haven't done
- NI = have done, but needs improvement
- S = satisfactory performance
- G = good performance (frequently more than satisfactory)
- O = outstanding performance

Enter in the columns provided the letter(s) which best represent:

- a. your present level of competence on each of the performance criteria
- b. the level of competence which you want to have achieved in five (5) years on each of the performance criteria

At the conclusion of each subsection, count the number of statements which you have rated S, G, or O. Enter this number in the space provided. At the conclusion of the checklist, you will be asked to record these subtotals and use them to compute the percentage of responses you have rated S or better.

-Because of the length of the checklist, you are encouraged to separate your work over several sessions to ensure thoughtful, accurate responses.

Please respond as honestly and as accurately as possible. This self-assessment format is designed to be the basis for both your decision regarding entry to the certification program and to help you begin the process of putting together a five-year development plan in the field of volunteer administration.

Remember that there are two parts to professional development as conceptualized in this system. The first is learning, by whatever means or combination of means you find most effective. The second is applying and practicing the skills you are developing to the point where your performance is satisfactory from the perspective of your professional peers.

At such time as you have both learned and in a satisfactory manner applied additional skills (aspects of competencies as reflected in the AVA performance criteria) in your salaried or nonsalaried work, and are able to give yourself a 75% or better rating, you are encouraged to submit to AVA an application to become a candidate in the Performance-Based Program for Certification in Volunteer Administration.

## FUNCTIONAL AREAS AND COMPETENCY STATEMENTS MANAGEMENT - I

### Self-assessment Rating Scale

- NK = No knowledge; haven't done
- SK = Some knowledge, but haven't done
- NI = Have done, but needs improvement
- S = Satisfactory performance
- G = Good performance (frequently more than satisfactory)
- O = Outstanding performance

### I. PROGRAM PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

This is the most basic task in volunteer administration. It involves the development of program goals consistent with the aims of the organization, the selection of objectives and alternative methods to reach those objectives. Effective planning and organization establishes the "map" that allows for the continuous operation of the program.

Program planning and organization requires that the volunteer administrator:

#### I.A. DEMONSTRATE KNOWLEDGE OF THE AGENCY/ORGANIZATION INCLUDING ITS MISSION/PURPOSE, ITS STRUCTURE AND THE POLICIES OR REGULATIONS THAT AFFECT ITS OPERATION.

##### Performance Criteria

- I.A.1 describe to others the history and the mission of the agency/ organization
- I.A.2 develop and/or interpret to others a philosophy for the involvement of volunteers in the agency/organization consistent with the aims of the organization
- I.A.3 describe the actual operational structure of the agency/ organization, including its:
  - 3.a. management structure
  - 3.b. relationship to its community, its clients/consumer groups, other agencies, and its funding or regulating bodies

A. Present level of competence	B. Level to achieve in 5 years
	//////////

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**I.B. DEMONSTRATE THE CAPABILITY TO ENGAGE IN PLANNING ACTIVITIES, ARMED WITH ADEQUATE INFORMATION ABOUT THE COMMUNITY AND THE AGENCY/ORGANIZATION, WHICH SET THE COURSE OF ACTION FOR THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM THROUGH GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION PLANS.**

- I.B.1** assess the community's potential volunteer resources (both human and material)
- I.B.2** describe factors affecting the community resources in the geographic area served by the agency/organization (such as employment conditions, demographic patterns, socioeconomic patterns, and community concerns), and relate these factors to agency/organization planning for volunteers
- I.B.3** describe broader trends which may affect agency planning for volunteers, such as: pending legislation; attitudes about volunteerism held by feminist groups, labor unions, and other professional groups; volunteer/career; and/or volunteer/academic credit concerns
- I.B.4** identify needs and opportunities for volunteer services within the agency/organization and facilitate others (staff, volunteers and clients) in assisting with this process
- I.B.5** write goal statements and objectives for the volunteer component of the agency/organization
- I.B.6** manage the ordering of objectives, the setting of priorities and the concentration of resources to accomplish the selected objectives
- I.B.7** assess resources necessary to accomplish objectives
- I.B.8** present the rationale and justification of a budget in relationship to program needs and monetary request
- I.B.9** work with other groups (auxiliaries, foundations, and other community groups) to seek additional funding as necessary
- I.B.10** monitor donated monies and materials to assure compliance with the donors' expectations (this may include individual gifts, as well as grants)

**I.C. DEMONSTRATE THE ABILITY TO MAKE DECISIONS**

- I.C.1** describe the nature of decisions and the range of possible actions which fall within the scope of the volunteer administrator's position

- I.C.2** involve relevant persons (volunteers, clients, staff and/or outside consultants) in the diagnosis and management of decision making and problem solving situations
- I.C.3** describe the agency/organization protocol in managing conflicts and making decisions
- I.C.4** manage decision making situations
- 4.a. identify and clarify the nature of the problem and its causes
- 4.b. find alternative solutions
- 4.c. analyze/compare alternative solutions
- 4.d. select among alternatives and implement a course of action
- 4.e. monitor results of the selected course of action
- I.D. ESTABLISH STRUCTURES AND PROCEDURES TO ENABLE THE SMOOTH OPERATION OF THE PROGRAM**
- I.D.1** develop or implement systems for volunteer/staff/client communications to insure that:
- 1.a. client needs are solicited and reflected in services offered
- 1.b. staff needs are solicited and reflected in volunteer service opportunities
- 1.c. volunteers have channels to voice needs and interests
- I.D.2** manage the development of systems to insure that:
- 2.a. records and reports are kept accurately and can be retrieved
- 2.b. volunteer job descriptions are written and opportunities are communicated
- 2.c. the entry and placement of volunteers is efficient and timely (includes volunteer applications, interviewing procedures, orientation and training program referral and placement systems)
- 2.d. volunteers, and staff who work with volunteers, receive recognition

**I.E. ASSIGN THE ACTIVITIES NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM THROUGH DELEGATION AND COORDINATION.**

**I.E.1** clearly define tasks and responsibilities delegated to volunteers and staff carefully chosen for these responsibilities

**I.E.2** provide support and supervision to volunteers

**I.E.3** provide prompt, factual feedback to volunteers

**I.E.4** establish channels for communication:

**4.a.** verbal communication channels, such as staff meetings, face-to-face contact, telephone calls

**4.b.** written communication channels, such as letters, reports, newsletters

**I.F. DEMONSTRATE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TARGET POPULATION, YOUR AGENCY/ORGANIZATION SERVES, INCLUDING NEEDS, STRENGTHS, LIMITATIONS**

**I.F.1** display general knowledge of your target population, i.e. general characteristics

**I.F.2** assess the specific needs of the target population

**I.F.3** describe the strengths of this population

**I.F.4** assess any specific limitations of the population, i.e. institutionalized or legally imposed restraints

**I.F.5** involve the target population in determining their special needs, strengths and limitations, i.e. by advisory boards made up of representatives of target group, surveys, asking questions, etc.

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**SUBTOTAL: INDICATE THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PERFORMANCE CRITERIA WHICH YOU HAVE RATED AT 5 OR ABOVE (5,G,0) IN COLUMN A. DO THE SAME FOR COLUMN B.**

**FUNCTIONAL AREAS AND COMPETENCY STATEMENTS**

**MANAGEMENT - II**

**II. STAFFING AND DIRECTING**

Selecting persons to do the jobs that need to be done and enabling their performance are staffing and directing responsibilities. This requires the design of job positions, the selection of personnel (both paid and volunteer), developing persons to do the jobs, guiding their performance and recognition for the services performed. 'Planning and Organization' is the preparation of the program to meet its goals. 'Staffing and Directing' is the actual implementation of the goals.

The staffing and directing function requires that the administrator:

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**II.A. DEMONSTRATE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE IN PLANNING AND CONDUCTING SUCCESSFUL RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGNS**

- II.A.1 design a year-long recruitment campaign
- II.A.2 develop and implement marketing techniques (such as exchanging value for value; identifying target populations and constituency groups) and apply them in a recruitment campaign
- II.A.3 implement varied recruitment modes (as appropriate to the target population and community situation), such as public speaking; media promotions; brochure development; and face-to-face contact
- II.A.4 adapt recruitment strategies according to the trends affecting the community and influencing volunteer participation
- II.A.5 involve staff, volunteers and other appropriate community people in implementing the recruitment campaign
- II.A.6 articulate affirmative action requirements and implement recruitment plans to meet requirements

**II.B. DEMONSTRATE KNOWLEDGE AND CAPABILITY IN SELECTING APPROPRIATE PERSONS TO FILL POSITIONS**

- II.B.1 determine necessary criteria for various positions in advance of the interview

A. Present level of competence	B. Level to achieve in 5 years
/////	/////

- ILB.2** implement sound interviewing practices in the selection of volunteers

  - 2.a. select an appropriate setting for the interview
  - 2.b. use active listening of verbal and nonverbal messages
  - 2.c. ask open ended questions
  - 2.d. record pertinent information gained during the interview after the session
- ILB.3** involve staff members and other volunteers in interviewing and selecting volunteers
- ILB.4** design volunteer opportunities to meet the talents of volunteers if they are different from available openings (whenever possible)
- ILB.5** interpret job descriptions and performance standards to volunteers prior to placement
- ILB.6** describe the volunteer's rights and responsibilities
- ILB.7** refer volunteers to other agencies if a position is not available for the particular individual
- ILB.8** interpret the mission and purpose of the agency/organization and volunteer program to the candidate
- ILB.9** match volunteers to positions based on the needs of the positions and the needs, motivations, and talents of the volunteers
- ILB.10** accumulate a successful history of matching volunteers to positions
- ILB.11** interpret the needs and placement requirements of the various categories of volunteers involved in the program, such as the handicapped, older persons, minorities, youth, etc.
- ILC. DEMONSTRATE KNOWLEDGE OF THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF PERSONNEL AND ASSURE THAT THESE NEEDS ARE ADDRESSED**

  - ILC.1** identify and assure that volunteers are adequately prepared to fulfill their positions through:

    - 1.a. orientation or preservice programs
    - 1.b. in-service educational programs
    - 1.c. ongoing supervision

- II.C.2 involve volunteers, staff and educators in planning and implementing educational programs
- II.C.3 maintain systems to identify and communicate information to volunteers and staff about educational programs external to the agency, that might be beneficial to those persons
- II.C.4 provide for orientation, training and/or consultation with staff in the utilization of volunteers
- II.C.5 apply knowledge of the principles of career development to volunteer experiences
  - 5.a. provide for the counsel/advisement of volunteers, assuring them of the program's concern for their ongoing personal development relative to their life, education and career within the aims of the program
  - 5.b. assist volunteers in evaluating their volunteer experiences and personal growth, career exploration/development, and competencies acquired through volunteer experiences
  - 5.c. identify community resources for assisting volunteers in exploring careers, identifying goals
- II.C.6 assure that adequate records on volunteer experiences, training received at the agency, meaningful job records and data for references are kept
- II.C.7 conduct performance appraisals with personnel on a regular basis
- II.D. DEMONSTRATE THE ABILITY TO MOTIVATE, COMMUNICATE WITH, AND LEAD VOLUNTEERS AND PAID STAFF
  - II.D.1 interpret and apply motivational theories (such as need hierarchies, power, affiliation, achievement motivation) in work with volunteers through selecting appropriate:
    - I.a. placements
    - I.b. type of recognition accorded individual volunteers
    - I.c. style of supervision
  - II.D.2 maintain ongoing channels of communication
  - II.D.3 insure longevity of volunteers in programs, or return of volunteers to program as in the case of students, or persons performing special, time-limited projects
  - II.D.4 document the use of motivation and leadership skills in the accomplishment of program goals through volunteer personnel (if volunteers are well placed, motivated, supported and directed, they will be able to accomplish the tasks assigned to them)

**ILE. RECOGNIZE THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF PERSONNEL**

- ILE.1** conduct formal volunteer recognition events well attended by invited volunteers and staff
- ILE.2** develop articles, plaques, or other formal recognition featuring the involvement of volunteers, by name
- ILE.3** write letters, notes, or other communications which individually recognize the work of volunteers and/or staff who work with volunteers
- ILE.4** promote volunteers to positions of greater responsibility or status
- ILE.5** recognize staff relative to their effective utilization of and assistance to volunteers

**IL.F. FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF VOLUNTEERS TO OTHER LIFE EXPERIENCES**

- IL.F.1** conduct exit interviews of volunteers choosing to terminate their involvement
- IL.F.2** create and/or maintain referral systems for volunteers to other agencies
- IL.F.3** establish and implement criteria for the termination of volunteers

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//////	//////

<b>SUBTOTAL: INDICATE THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PERFORMANCE CRITERIA WHICH YOU HAVE RATED AT S OR ABOVE ( S,G,0) IN COLUMN A. DO THE SAME FOR COLUMN B.</b>		
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## FUNCTIONAL AREAS AND COMPETENCY STATEMENTS

### MANAGEMENT - III

#### III. CONTROLLING

This is the process of monitoring and evaluating the program to determine if events and activities have conformed to plans and produced the desired results. Documenting results and revising plans based on evaluation outcomes is part of the controlling process.

The controlling function requires that the volunteer administrator:

#### III.A. DEMONSTRATE THE ABILITY TO MONITOR AND EVALUATE TOTAL PROGRAM RESULTS

- III.A.1 develop and administer instruments designed to measure specific program results relative to program objectives
- III.A.2 monitor volunteer attendance and/or attrition rates, and use this information in evaluating the effectiveness of placements and development programs
- III.A.3 monitor the quantity and quality of volunteer use by various agency department areas and/or staff
- III.A.4 conduct exit interviews with volunteers to determine reasons for leaving and to evaluate the volunteer's experience with the agency/organization
- III.A.5 informally ask volunteers, staff, and clients about their experiences, concerns or problems as they relate to the volunteer program activities
- III.A.6 monitor financial expenditures and make necessary adjustments to exercise fiscal control and responsibility
- III.A.7 solicit and make ongoing constructive use of positive and negative feedback

#### III.B. DEMONSTRATE THE ABILITY TO DOCUMENT PROGRAM RESULTS AND TO APPLY THIS INFORMATION IN FUTURE PLANNING

- III.B.1 compile and interpret the results of measurement instruments and disseminate this information as appropriate
- III.B.2 write reports describing volunteer program activities including appropriate figures on attendance and project outcomes

	A. Present level of competence	B. Level to achieve in 5 years
	/////	/////
	/////	/////

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- III.B.3 adjust program plans based on the results of formal and informal evaluation activities
- III.B.4 document financial expenditures necessary to achieve program outcome
- III.B.5 compile reports describing the degree to which the program meets standards, such as Hospital Accreditation or AVB accreditation standards for VAC's, when needed
- III.B.6 maintain up-to-date personnel files on volunteers which include performance appraisals, training records and other appropriate information

<b>SUBTOTAL: INDICATE THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PERFORMANCE CRITERIA WHICH YOU HAVE RATED AT 5 OR ABOVE (S,G,O) IN COLUMN A. DO THE SAME FOR COLUMN B.</b>		
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**FUNCTIONAL AREAS AND COMPETENCY STATEMENTS**

**INTERPERSONAL BEHAVIOR - IV**

**IV. INDIVIDUAL, GROUP AND ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR**

Volunteer programs exist within the larger context of the agency/organization and the surrounding community. Maintaining working relationship in all of these areas is vital for successful program administration.

Individual, group and organizational behavior requires that the volunteer administrator:

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**IV.A. DEMONSTRATE THE ABILITY TO WORK EFFECTIVELY WITH MANY DIFFERENT SEGMENTS OF THE POPULATION**

**IV.A.1** compile a demographic profile of volunteer and salaried work force (i.e., review of age, race, educational, etc. data) and analyze this information in relation to surrounding community.

**IV.A.2** maintain effective working relationships with volunteers, staff and community persons

Refer to the previous sections

**IV.B. DEMONSTRATE A KNOWLEDGE OF GROUP PROCESS AND THE ABILITY TO WORK WITH, AND AS, A MEMBER OF GROUPS**

**IV.B.1** serve productively on committees and/or boards

**IV.B.2** form and/or convene committees, such as advisory committees, or boards of directors

**IV.B.3** identify and interpret group goals and objectives

**IV.B.4** create and follow agendas for committee meetings (as evidenced by committee minutes or reports)

**IV.B.5** inform others of the progress or outcome of committee meetings through written and/or verbal communications

**IV.B.6** appoint appropriate persons to committees/boards based on the desired goals and function of the group

A. Present level of competence	B. Level to achieve in 5 years
/////	/////
/////	/////

**IV.C. DEMONSTRATE KNOWLEDGE OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND DYNAMICS OF CHANGE**

- IV.C.1** describe other agencies and organizations within the community which interact with or affect your agency/ organization and volunteer program, and explain the ways in which these agencies or groups affect your agency/ organization and volunteer program
- IV.C.2** describe the advocacy efforts of volunteers to your agency/ organization and the broader community, particularly those advocacy efforts that affect your area of operation
- IV.C.3** serve as a catalyst to help volunteers, clients, or community groups identify areas where change may be needed
- IV.C.4** articulate factors creating blocks to change and suggest methods to facilitate change

**SUBTOTAL: INDICATE THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PERFORMANCE CRITERIA WHICH YOU HAVE RATED AT 5 OR ABOVE (5,6,0) IN COLUMN A. DO THE SAME FOR COLUMN B.**

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**FUNCTIONAL AREAS AND COMPETENCY STATEMENTS**

**KNOWLEDGE OF THE PROFESSION - V**

**V. GROUNDING IN THE PROFESSION**

A working knowledge of the field of volunteerism, its history, tradition, guiding philosophical background and current trends and issues separates the technician from the professional.

A volunteer administrator who is grounded in the profession can:

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**V.A. DEMONSTRATE KNOWLEDGE OF EXTERNAL REGULATIONS AFFECTING VOLUNTEERISM**

- V.A.1 describe tax deductions available to volunteers
- V.A.2 identify and interpret legislation, regulations and/or guidelines affecting your agency
- V.A.3 identify sources for procuring pertinent governmental information
- V.A.4 identify and interpret legislation, regulations and/or guidelines affecting voluntary action in general
- V.A.5 interpret the regulations governing lobbying done by voluntary organizations

**V.B. DEMONSTRATE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF VOLUNTARY ACTION AND TRENDS AFFECTING VOLUNTEERISM**

- V.B.1 articulate and interpret to others a philosophy of voluntary action and its relationship to a democratic society and to service institutions
- V.B.2 describe the history and scope of volunteer involvement in one's agency/organization
- V.B.3 interpret the AVA "Professional Ethics in Volunteer Services Administration" and demonstrate its relationship to one's program in at least two ways

A. Present level of competence	B. Level to achieve in 5 years
/////	/////
/////	/////

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V.B.4 articulate a personal philosophy\* on issues in contemporary volunteer services administration such as stipends for service; academic or employment credit for volunteer work; feminist movement and its effect on volunteerism; and corporation and labor views on volunteerism.

V.C. DEMONSTRATE KNOWLEDGE OF THE PROFESSION OF VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION

- V.C.1 identify the professional groups for volunteer administrators in one's local geographic region; and at the national level
- V.C.2 document participation in a professional group or association
- V.C.3 identify periodicals in volunteer administration
- V.C.4 identify and describe trends in educational programs for volunteer administration
- V.C.5 attend workshops or conferences on volunteerism
- V.C.6. read professional materials related to volunteer program management

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<p><b>SUBTOTAL: INDICATE THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PERFORMANCE CRITERIA WHICH YOU HAVE RATED AT 5 OR ABOVE (5,6,0) IN COLUMN A. DO THE SAME FOR COLUMN B.</b></p>			
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\*This philosophy should demonstrate an awareness of both sides of the issues and one's personal position on the issue.

**FUNCTIONAL AREAS AND COMPETENCY STATEMENTS**

**SPECIAL CONCERNS - VI**

**VI. INDIVIDUALIZED ADDITIONAL COMPETENCY**

Each person works in a unique occupational setting. The competencies required of the administrator will vary in some degree according to position.

In the space below, please add at least one additional competency that you feel has been of importance to your satisfactory performance in your job(s) during the last five years. List at least three performance criteria that would indicate your attainment of this competency.

For example, a volunteer administrator working in a rehabilitation setting may need to have working specialized knowledge in the use of various pieces of equipment, such as prosthetic devices, braces and wheelchairs. In the criminal justice setting, the administrator may need to have specialized working knowledge of the penal code and the judicial setting. The volunteer administrator in a voluntary health organization may need to have specialized working knowledge of a wide range of fund-raising projects.

In the space provided, provide your additional competency, and rate your ability on the performance criteria you list.

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VL

	_____
	_____
	_____
	_____
VL1	_____
	_____
	_____
VL2	_____
	_____
	_____
VL3	_____
	_____
	_____
	_____

A. Present level of competence	B. Level to achieve in 5 years

<b>SUBTOTAL: INDICATE THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PERFORMANCE CRITERIA WHICH YOU HAVE RATED AT 5 OR ABOVE (5,G,0) IN COLUMN A. DO THE SAME FOR COLUMN B.</b>		
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## C. Self-Assessment Checklist Score Sheet

Packet # \_\_\_\_\_

## Functional Areas

I	II	III	IV	V	VI
A.1	A.1	A.1	A.1	A.1	VL1
A.2	A.2	A.2	A.2	A.2	VL2
A.3	A.3	A.3	B.1	A.3	VL3
A.3.a.	A.4	A.4	B.2	A.4	Subtot.
A.3.b.	A.5	A.5	B.3	A.5	
B.1	A.6	A.6	B.4	B.1	Subtot.
B.2	B.1	A.7	B.5	B.2	
B.3	B.2 ///	B.1	B.6	B.3	
B.4	B.2.a.	B.2	C.1	B.4	
B.5	B.2.b.	B.3	C.2	C.1	
B.6	B.2.c.	B.4	C.3	C.2	
B.7	B.2.d.	B.5	C.4	C.3	
B.7.a.	B.3	B.6		C.4	
B.7.b.	B.4		Subtot.	C.5	
B.7.c.	B.5	Subtot.		C.6	
C.1	B.6			Subtot.	
C.2	B.7				
C.3	B.8				
C.4 ///	B.9				
C.4.a.	B.10				
C.4.b.	B.11				
C.4.c.	C.1 ///				
C.4.d.	C.1.a.				
C.4.e.	C.1.b.				
D.1 ///	C.1.c.				
D.1.a.	C.2				
D.1.b.	C.3				
D.1.c.	C.4				
D.2 ///	C.5 ///				
D.2.a.	C.5.a.				
D.2.b.	C.5.b.				
D.2.c.	C.5.c.				
D.2.d.	C.6				
E.1	C.7				
E.2	D.1 ///				
E.3	D.1.a.				
E.4 ///	D.1.b.				
E.4.a.	D.1.c.				
E.4.b.	D.2				
F.1	D.3				
F.2	D.4				
F.3	E.1				
F.4	E.2				
F.5	E.3				
	E.4				
	E.5				
Subtot.	F.1				
	F.2				
	F.3				
	Subtot.				

## INSTRUCTIONS

After you have completed your self-assessment checklist, please transcribe your scores onto this form. While the procedure is a simple one, care should be exercised to ensure accuracy.

Indicate the subtotals of the number of performance criteria for each functional area which you have rated S, G, O for both columns in the space provided.

Record your subtotals on the Self-Assessment Checklist Summary Sheet which follows.

### Self-Assessment Checklist Summary Sheet

Packet # \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: In the spaces provided below, record the subtotals within each of the functional areas.

	Total Number of Performance Criteria Rated <u>S</u> or Higher	
<u>Functional Areas</u>	Present Level at S or Higher	Total Number of Performance Criteria
I. Management: Planning and Organization	_____	39
II. Management: Staffing and Directing	_____	45
III. Management: Controlling	_____	13
IV. Individual, Group & Organizational Behavior	_____	12
V. Grounding in the Profession	_____	15
VI. Individualized Additional Competency	_____	3
A. Total performance criteria rated S or higher	_____	XXX
B. Total number of performance criteria	127	127
C. Percentage (A divided by B)	_____	XXX

#### Interpretation of Scores

The AVA certification process represents a significant and time-consuming undertaking. AVA wants persons who select to enter the program to have a reasonable chance at successfully completing the process. With this in mind, a scoring system has been established to guide the potential applicant.

If you have scored 75% or above (95 or more ranked "S" or higher) in column "A" (your present performance), you are considered to have a reasonable expectation of completing the certification program successfully.

If your total score falls below 75%, it is suggested that you use this Self-Assessment Checklist as a guide to assist you with your continuing development in the field of volunteer administration. It is not recommended that you submit this application and officially begin the certification process until you are honestly and realistically able to assess yourself as having achieved satisfactory ("S") or better competence on at least 75% of the AVA performance criteria.



### Philosophy of Volunteer Administration

In approximately 200 words or less, prepare a typewritten statement on your philosophy of volunteerism and the role of the professional in volunteerism. You will be asked to expand this essay in your portfolio.

Note your packet number at the top of each page.

Susan Ellis has defined volunteerism and voluntarism:

1. volunteerism: anything related to volunteers or volunteer programs, regardless of setting, funding source, etc. (for example, this includes all government-related volunteers).
2. voluntarism: refers to anything voluntary in our society, including religion; basically refers to voluntary agencies (those with volunteer boards and private funding)—but voluntary agencies do not always utilize volunteers.

Examples of Philosophy of Volunteer Administration essays are included on pages 61 to 73.

### Narrative for AVA Certification Application

Write a narrative (1000 words maximum) which describes a project in which you demonstrated a satisfactory performance (S, G or O) on at least two different competencies from a single functional area (e.g. Management I—"Program Planning and Organization," etc.).

The project, or program area you describe, whether undertaken as salaried or nonsalaried work, should have taken place during the five year period immediately prior to the date of this application. The effort should be something which you initiated, planned, and/or implemented in an administrative or leadership capacity.

To assist you with this narrative refer to the instructions and examples.

Note your packet number at the top of each page.

Examples of Management Narratives are included on pages 38 to 42.

## Certification Narratives

### What is a narrative?

A narrative is a written report of an event in which you were involved as a manager in volunteer administration with some responsibility for the outcome. The narrative is to be a self-critical record of your role in the event, including the decisions you made, the actions you took, what you did well and what could have been improved. The purpose of writing the narratives is to provide evidence of satisfactory or better performance on a representative sample of professional competency.

### Length of narratives:

The narratives may each be no more than 1000 words (4-5 double-spaced pages). An economical style is therefore a necessity.

### Parts of the narrative:

The narrative must have four parts: Each part is to be clearly distinguished with subheadings. The parts need not be equal in length.

- (a) **Background:** Enough information to set the event in context. What community and/or organizational needs were involved in this event; when or how you became aware of/involved in the event; what pressures and/or persons precipitated and shaped the event.
- (b) **Description:** What actually happened and the role you played in the event. (Report in as much detail as feasible, given the overall word count limitations.) Be sure to clearly and fully address the performance criteria as listed in the self-assessment checklist.
- (c) **Analysis:** Identify issues, and cause and effect relationships. Explain why you handled the situation in the way described. Try to answer the question: What was going on here?
- (d) **Outcome and Results:** This section allows you to evaluate the event and your own effectiveness in managing the situation. Did you do what you set out to do? How do you know—what tangible and intangible results can you point to? In what ways did you function effectively? In what ways could your performance have been improved? What factors or forces emerged which you did not anticipate?

### Special consideration:

Be sure to clearly and fully address the competencies identified in the self-assessment checklist. Make every effort to document each competency statement in a single narrative rather than sprinkling documentation for a given competency statement across two or more narratives.

**Sample Narratives:**

**Management Narrative #1:**

**Orientation of Volunteer and Paid Personnel**

HC

(a) **Background:** At Lincoln Psychiatric Hospital, orientation workshops for new volunteers and paid staff (with the exception of nurses) are held every other week. When I assumed my current position, responsibility for the format of orientation workshops fell to me. The Public Affairs Director also helped shape them. The Hospital's education department played a resource role for the effort.

The Orientation Program had been run rather informally. I was asked to review the Program with an eye to making any improvements that seemed appropriate.

(b) **Description:** A major component of the Orientation is the overview of the Hospital. I alternate presentation of this material with the Public Affairs Director. We met several times with the Associate Director of the Hospital to identify what should be included. We reaffirmed the need for an overview of the Hospital's mission and services and agreed that the Associate Director would do one of these presentations himself as a role model for us, early on. The Department of Education helped us prepare transparencies and provided a.v. equipment.

We also included the viewing of a film on patient care and a tour of the facility. In addition, it takes an hour to discuss procedures, regulations, and some preparation for patient interaction with volunteers. Paid staff require an hour on safety, employee health, and personnel issues.

As a handout for the Program, I prepared a Lincoln Hospital orientation folder. I worked with our graphic artist to design an attractive cover with large letters saying: "LINCOLN HOSPITAL, WHO, WHAT, WHERE." Under my supervision, an experienced volunteer put together a list of executive and management personnel and a list of all the programs on each floor. This provides much more of what new personnel need than does the Hospital's telephone directory.

HC

We also included in the folder brochures of educational programs, an employee health brochure, the flyer for the Volunteer Services Program, and a map of parking facilities in the area. When going over the contents of these folders, I encourage volunteers to get in the habit of checking the "Training" section of the Volunteer Services bulletin board and the "Training" column of our quarterly newsletter.

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Single spaced for circulation--all application and portfolio narratives are to be double spaced. Personal and institutional names are fictional for the purpose of these sample narratives.

To learn how other hospitals organized their orientations, I spoke to the responsible people at several are hospitals and attended an orientation at one of the largest. I brought back pointers, particularly about how to involve participants more actively in the sessions.

#### IA ID IIB

The volunteer part of the orientation is a time to identify goals and expectations, to anticipate difficulties and prepare for them, and in general to enhance the enthusiasm of new recruits. At one time we had a slide show for this purpose. But it was too passive for volunteers to sit through another media event following the film on patient care. The segment in which I now deliver this material is more interactive than the slide show. It includes highlights of the most recent surveys of patients and paid personnel regarding the involvement of volunteers, and how this information is reflected in our staffing patterns.

#### IIC

When we went over to a larger nursing staff, specific and lengthier orientations were organized by nursing administration. I requested that I meet with new nurses during this time (once a month) to sensitize them to volunteer needs and potential. Since most nurses have had experience as volunteers, they can easily respond to my questions about what makes for a good volunteer experience.

#### IIIA

At several points when we have reviewed our orientation, I devised a questionnaire to elicit evaluative comments from orientation participants. Feedback has been useful and encouraging. One concern reflected in those questionnaires was a desire for more opportunity for questions, to which we have responded. Volunteer participation on the Orientation Planning Committee, which only dates back to the last six months, has among other things helped to focus our attention on some of the subtler messages contained in this data.

#### IC

(c) Analysis: I feel satisfied that the orientation is well presented. A totally joint volunteer and paid format does not seem to be the best arrangement. However, the duplication of content together with the benefits of visibility for the volunteer program and a greater feeling of integration of volunteer and paid personnel argue for as much overlap as possible. My solution was to recommend to the planning group that we separate the two groups for the hour long segments dealing with their special needs and then bring them back together again for the tour. This has worked well and the additional hour reduced the time pressure on the rest of the program.

At various times I have suggested to the Hospital's administration that the orientation be expanded to include specific additional sessions for selected groups of staff such as secretarial orientation to forms; a clinical orientation for billing purposes; etc. These suggestions were not adopted until shortly after February, two years ago, when a failure in communications resulted in no tour guide appearing at an orientation attended by several new administrative staff. The result was that responsibility for overseeing the orientation was given to an administrative executive, and only then were the additional components I had been recommending added.

## IVC

It might have helped if I had been in the habit of making arrangements for back up personnel for key assignments. But more to the point, I think I could have accomplished all of these improvements and retained responsibility for the entire Orientation Program if I had reported more regularly on this part of my work to my supervisor, in writing, and if I had been spending more effort, generally, to stay in touch with other members of the senior management group. I learned from the experience how important it is to convey to senior management the professional approach we are taking in Volunteer Services.

(d) Outcome and Results: Since starting my presentations to nurses, I have found that fewer volunteers complain that the nurses do not pay attention to them. Though my leadership role in organizing the joint volunteer and paid Orientation Program has ended, I feel pleased that the Program's organization is more tightly built and that so many of my ideas have been implemented.

Changes in my operating style motivated by this experience have led to a considerable improvement in management support to Volunteer Services. One indication is this year's 7% increase in budget when most departments received no increase or a cutback.

Documentation: Orientation announcement memos, schedules, the orientation folder, and evaluations forms. Also available is the latest executive summaries of surveys of patients, paid personnel (and this year, volunteer personnel, also) regarding volunteer involvement. Verification can be had from Mr. John McKinlay, Associate Director of Lincoln Hospital, and Ms. Frances Tildon, volunteer representative on the Orientation Planning Committee.

### Management Narrative #2:

#### Terminating a Volunteer

IIF IC IE

(a) Background: Terminating a volunteer is one of the most demanding tasks facing a Director of Volunteer Services. It is hard to decide that a volunteer is detrimental to the Program and particularly difficult to face the volunteer and tell him or her of this decision.

Over the years, I have worked with those who supervise volunteers to underscore two basic premises: first, we are not forced to keep volunteers who are adversely affecting patients, other volunteers, or salaried staff; and secondly, before terminating a volunteer, supervisors must be sure to make every effort to work with the volunteer and provide feedback and supervision aimed at improving the situation.

The process developed by the volunteer and paid staff serving on a policy and procedures committee is that after several attempts to ameliorate the situation on the part of the volunteer supervisor and the volunteer, a meeting would be called with the volunteer, the volunteer supervisor, and myself to confront the issue. This three way meeting eliminates the risks of conflicting stories and denials of allegations. It also offers the supervisor and myself the support of one another.

This policy is conveyed at orientation sessions and underlined by me individually to each new head nurse or volunteer supervisor when staffing changes in these posi-

tions occur. In general, we hope to detect inappropriate behavior on the part of a volunteer very early on. I have developed a scheme which includes an evaluation from both the volunteer and the volunteer supervisor after a month's participation on a unit.

In a recent termination, I was alerted to the difficulty being experienced on a children's unit by means of the one-month evaluation. The report from the supervisor of the volunteer in question described teasing of the children, non-compliance with rules and requests, and several inappropriate mannerisms.

(b) Description: I immediately called the nurse supervisor to determine her role in correcting the situation. She said she had discussed these difficulties with the volunteer repeatedly and had not yet seen improvement.

I asked her what alternatives she was considering. We discussed whether it might help if the volunteer were paired with another, more experienced volunteer; whether another, more pointed work improvement conversation might be in order; or whether it was time to consider termination. She decided to conduct another, quite direct work improvement discussion and to give the volunteer two more weeks. When this time lapse did not result in appreciable change, I supported her decision to terminate him. The volunteer was a student who was about to leave on his own, but beyond our custom of holding exit interviews, the supervisor felt it particularly important for him to have this feedback because he wished to pursue a career in this field. I strongly agreed.

An appointment was scheduled. I opened with a statement to the volunteer to the effect that there had been difficulties with his volunteer participation which the nurse wanted to discuss. As she told him of the staff's dissatisfaction and described several instances, he expressed disbelief, amazement, and denial. Though he acknowledged some of the incidents, he was shocked that his actions were interpreted so negatively, this despite their previous conversations, two of which had been quite pointed.

(c) Analysis: The process enabled me to reflect to him that he clearly was surprised and hurt. This enabled him to feel some emotional support and understanding from us. I always try to provide the opportunity and permission to feel the rejection and express it if the volunteer wishes in this type of situation.

When a volunteer (or volunteer supervisor) does not appreciate the reactions to his behavior, as in this case, I am able to point out that therein lies the problem—that unperceived by him or her, the individual's actions are viewed negatively. Lack of awareness of how others perceive this behavior prevents him or her from correcting the situation. I underscore that he needs to know that others see him in this way.

This division of labor--the volunteer supervisor providing the factual feedback and my process oriented approach, focusing on feeling--enables the volunteer to receive the information less defensively. In this case, I could also emphasize how the staff had really wanted to give him every opportunity to change and that that was the reason for giving him the additional two weeks. I try to interpret to the volunteer the goals of volunteer participation and where he or she may have strayed from these goals and always I allow time for rebuttal or feelings of rejection. I feel this section and this narrative, overall, indicate something of how I try to apply the AVA ethical principles of "Human Dignity" and "Mutuality."

Luckily, termination does not occur frequently (probably less than once a year). However, in a psychiatric setting some people seek to volunteer to gain access to

psychiatry because of their own unacknowledged personal difficulties. I try to avoid this prospect by careful screening at initial interviews. I go over job activities and expectations (our terminology for performance standards) in an attempt to make sure the position we are considering is a good fit for that individual. I encourage volunteer supervisors to do a second screening when the volunteer goes for the second interview, with them.

(d) Outcome and Results: I think I handled this termination effectively and that the even handed policy and procedural framework developed with my leadership is serving the program well. One benefit from having a clear and consistent policy regarding terminations is that the above experience improved my relationship with the unit. I am perceived as supportive of staff needs as well as of volunteers.

We are considering the addition of an appeals procedure calling for the appointment of a committee of volunteer and paid personnel in the event a terminated volunteer wishes to appeal a decision to terminate. The committee would meet with the individual, his or her supervisor, and me. Its decision would be binding.

Documentation: The "Volunteer Services Policy and Procedures Manual," minutes of the Policy and Procedures Committee meetings, and/or the agenda I prepared for this termination interview are available upon request. Verification of this particular incident can be obtained from Constance Baker, RN, at Lincoln Hospital.

## CHAPTER 3: THE PORTFOLIO PROCESS

### **Introduction to the Portfolio Process**

#### **What is a Portfolio?**

A portfolio, in this context, is a self-critical description of several of your professional experiences and accomplishments. Through a series of evaluative narratives, you present yourself for assessment by your professional peers.

As the title of this program indicates, the focus in the portfolio is on Performance, rather than on what you know or how you learned what you know (the focus of traditional education). AVA, as a professional organization, is interested in what you have been able to do with what you know. The focus of the portfolio is an organized, methodical review of how you have performed as a practicing professional, the work of volunteer administration.

In putting together your portfolio, you will have the opportunity to:

- Assess your professional skills and knowledge, identifying both your strengths and areas which can benefit from further development,
- State your philosophy of volunteerism and volunteer administration in terms of the 1980's,
- Describe and evaluate your performance in several specific situations in order to illustrate demonstrated competence in the field of volunteer administration and an understanding of what could have improved your performance in those situations,
- Chart career and development objectives,
- Develop pride in meeting professional standards.

Your portfolio will be assessed by the Certification Assessment Review Panel against the following set of criteria:

#### **Criteria for Assessment**

- Evidence of satisfactory performance on 75% or more of the 128 performance criteria defining the 21 AVA competencies, and on your ability to provide adequate documentation, including products and statements of verification of this performance, when these are requested.
- Evidence of the ability to accurately describe and assess in writing one's own performance, noting relative strengths and weaknesses.
- Evidence of a cohesive relationship between the candidate's philosophy of volunteerism and the candidate's on-the-job application of this philosophy.
- Evidence of the candidate's ability to relate sound management processes to professional action.
- Evidence of the candidate's ability to recognize and articulate his/her reason(s) for specific actions.
- Evidence of the candidate's understanding of his or her role and impact in the professional settings with which he or she is involved.
- Evidence of the candidate's ability to apply learning from professional peers, professional reading, and educational programs to the work situation.



- Evidence of a commitment to continuing professional development, and the ability to formulate realistic career and development plans.
- Overall, evidence of clarity of thought, analytical thinking, cohesiveness of ideas, practical knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply one's knowledge and skills on the job in the field of volunteer administration.

The Certification Assessment Review Panel will request specific documentation to verify functional areas discussed. Do not send any products, letters, etc. until requested. A case study may also be submitted for your analysis.

### **The Role of a Mentor**

It is recommended that each self-initiated candidate work with a qualified mentor. The mentor will assist the candidate in developing a credible portfolio and will encourage the candidate to examine his/her performance critically.

By definition, the mentor will be someone currently working in the field.

This individual must:

- be recognized by his or her peers for the quality of his or her work,
- be knowledgeable about the field of volunteer administration and the role of the professional in the field,
- and be aware of the field beyond his/her immediate job setting.

Active membership and Certification with AVA is strongly encouraged.

The mentor must have the time and ability to meet with the candidate and assist him or her with the portfolio process.

Mentors may be recruited either by the candidate or by the AVA Regional Certification Liaison or the local Certification Committee (if one has been organized).

### **Role of Peer Study Group**

Candidates are encouraged to form peer study groups after having attended a workshop. (They can be organized the day of the workshop.) The group will serve as a support system as each candidate goes through the development of their portfolio.

The group can set goal dates for completion of materials along the way and help monitor each others progress.

Candidates may choose to have discussion groups to share concerns and discuss evaluation of their experiences for inclusion in their portfolio.

### **Presentation of Your Portfolio**

Your portfolio should have a professional appearance: be typed; neat; well organized and arranged; correct with respect to spelling, grammar, and punctuation; and have appropriate headings and subheadings.

With exceptions as noted in the portfolio directions, following, all information should be double spaced.

All pages should be numbered consecutively with the number appearing on the upper righthand corner of the page. Each page should have your packet # on it. Avoid using names and putting your name on the page whenever possible to attain anonymity during the review process.

Specify the functional area being discussed in your narrative at the top of each paragraph using the related performance criteria as a guide for the narrative.

### **Copies and Mailing**

The original copy of your portfolio, along with 4 clear copies, should be mailed to:

AVA  
Certification Assessment Review Panel  
P.O. Box 4584  
Boulder, CO 80306

### **Time Lines**

Candidates may take up to three years from the date of their acceptance into the program to complete their portfolio. Candidates not able to complete their portfolio in that time frame may request extensions. However, it is the prerogative of the Professional Development Committee to hold candidates responsible for any new or revised criteria. Any additional fees for services required to support an extension will be set on a case by case basis by the committee.

Following submission of your portfolio, a "Case Study for Analysis and Response," may be mailed to you. Your analysis and response must be returned to the Certification Assessment Panel within 18 days from the postmarked date the Case is mailed to you.

### **Appeals**

Candidates may appeal the denial of certification, in writing, to the AVA Ethics and Standards Committee, within 45 days of the receipt of formal notification of the Certification Assessment Panel's decision.

**Components of the Portfolio  
Checklist**

- \_\_\_ Title Page
- \_\_\_ Table of Contents
- \_\_\_ I. Autobiographical Outline and Volunteer Administration Work Experience - p. 50.
- \_\_\_ II. Philosophy of Volunteerism Statement (not to exceed 1000 words) - p. 51.
- \_\_\_ III. Management Performance Narratives - p. 52.  
Write 2 Management Narratives (not to exceed 1000 words each)
- \_\_\_ IV. Write 1 Behavioral Narrative (not to exceed 1000 words) - p. 54.
- \_\_\_ V. Write 3 Grounding in the Profession Narratives (not to exceed 500 words each) - p. 54.
- \_\_\_ VI. Individualized Competency Narrative (optional) - p. 55.  
Write 1 Narrative of a competency specific to your area of work not covered elsewhere (up to 500 words)
- \_\_\_ VII. Career and Development Objectives Statement should be 1000 words or less and can look ahead 2 to 5 years - p. 56.
- \_\_\_ VIII. Portfolio Review Form plus \$50 fee.

Additional Instructions

- a) At least 10 of the original competency areas must be addressed and you may also submit the optional individualized additional competency.
- b) When addressing competencies use performance criteria sub-headings as a guide and checklist.
- c) For each narrative, functional areas should be indicated (i.e. I. Program Planning and Organization). Specific competencies should also be indicated (i.e. I.C Ability to Make Decisions). While it is not necessary to reference individual performance criteria, it is expected that most or all will be addressed in demonstrating a competency.
- d) Specific documentation may be requested to verify functional areas discussed. Send only when requested.
- e) A case study may be sent to a candidate for further analysis and review.

**Portfolio Review Form**

Please Type or Print Packet Registration # \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Last \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_ M.I. \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Workshop Attended \_\_\_\_\_

Self-initiating candidate \_\_\_\_\_

Submit Completed Portfolio for Evaluation. Write Packet Registration # on each page. (Original and 4 copies)

Check as applicable and submit fee to AVA, P.O. Box 4584, Boulder CO 80306. (Write packet registration # on your check.)

\_\_\_\_\_ AVA Member \$50

\_\_\_\_\_ Member of AVA Affiliate Organization\* \$50

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of organization

\_\_\_\_\_ Non-AVA Member \$50

\* Enclose copy of proof verifying current membership status, i.e., membership card, roster, AVA membership number, etc.

MEMBERS OF LOCAL CHAPTERS OF NATIONAL AFFILIATES ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR AFFILIATE MEMBER BENEFITS UNLESS THE CHAPTER IS INDEPENDENTLY AFFILIATED WITH AVA.

I fully understand that my signature verifies that I performed the work as stated; that I have presented my experiences accurately and honestly to the best of my ability; and that I am sole author of this portfolio. I understand that falsification or misrepresentation are grounds for the denial or revocation of certification.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Sample Title Page**

\*\*\*

**Association for**

**Volunteer Administration**

**Portfolio**

**in application for**

**Certified in Volunteer Administration**

**C.V.A.**

**A Performance Based Approach**

\*\*\*

**Submitted by:**

(please print name,  
address, and day and  
evening phone numbers)

I fully understand that my signature verifies that I performed the work as stated; that I have presented my experiences accurately and honestly to the best of my ability; and that I am sole author of this portfolio. I understand that falsification or misrepresentation are grounds for the denial or revocation of certification.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Components of the Portfolio - Instructions

### Preparing the Table of Contents

The purpose of this page is to provide the reader of your portfolio with an easy reference to each section of the portfolio. Major headings, significant subheadings, and page numbers should be included.

Please follow this format closely, i.e. use the same major headings and insert your own subheadings and page numbers, as appropriate.

### Sample Table of Contents

I.	Autobiographical Outline	1
II.	Philosophy of Volunteerism Statement	3
III.	Management Performance Narratives	
	A. Management Narrative #1 - "Terminating a Volunteer"	5
	B. Management Narrative #2 - "Volunteer Advocacy Training"	9
IV.	Behavioral Performance Narratives	
	A. Behavioral Narrative #1 - "Educational Collaboration"	13
V.	Grounding in the Profession Narratives	
	A. External Regulation Narrative	17
	B. History, Philosophical Trends	18
	C. Knowledge of the Profession	19
VI.	Individualized Competency (Optional)	—
VI.	Career and Development Objectives	21

### Section I: Autobiographical Outline

The candidate's applicable life experiences, to include work (salaried and nonsalaried) and education are to be enumerated chronologically in Section I, beginning with earliest experiences and moving forward (see example). While sufficient information should be provided to place the candidate's pertinent experiences into perspective, special attention should be given to the work experiences which are to be described in the Performance narrative section of the portfolio.

For each work experience which will be described in the portfolio, the following information must be given:

1. Specific dates of the experience (month and year experience began, to month and year experience ended)
2. Name of organization with which you worked
3. Exact position title for each experience
4. Brief list of the major responsibilities entailed in each experience.

This section should not exceed two pages in length. Single space type is acceptable.

#### Sample Autobiographical Outline

- 1957-1961 Buckness University, BA in psychology
- 1961-1968 Extensive volunteer work with Valleyview State Hospital. Worked directly with elderly patients as a friendly visitor.
- 1969-1971 Returned to school, part time. Completed 21 credits toward the degree of Master of Arts in Administration at Penn. State.
- 1972-1976 Administrative volunteer at Jonesville Art Institute. Twelve hours per week as chair of Special Exhibits Committee.
- 9/76-4/79 Assistant Director, Jonesville Art Institute. Responsible for coordinating all service volunteer activities, as well as student intern placements. Managed public relations efforts. At the appointment of the Board, served as staff liaison to the Site Selection Committee for the new building project. Reported to Adele Smith, Director.
- 5/78-5/81 Member, Board of Directors, Jonesville YWCA. Responsible for Capital Improvements Fund Drive. With a committee of six other volunteers and countless assistants, raised \$162,000 for construction of new indoor swimming pool. Received the Y's Volunteer of the Year Award for these efforts.
- 5/79-Present Director, Special Services Division of Deere county. Responsible for bringing cultural and recreational activities to all county agencies (youth home, juvenile detention center, county jail, transitional services, and home for older adults). Coordinate and supervise 70 volunteers and two salaried staff who assist with this project. Responsibilities include fund raising, proposal development and general division management, budget \$136,000. Report to county commissioners and to a Citizens' Advisory Committee.

Note: Work situations Sept. '76 onward are the subject of performance narratives in this portfolio.

Footnotes to the autobiographical outline explaining "unusual" or "out of the ordinary" work assignments are acceptable.

## Section II: Philosophy of Volunteerism Statement

This section allows you to expand and develop the Philosophy of Volunteerism Statement you began working on in your application. In a statement not to exceed 1000 words, each candidate is to expand the personal statement on his or her philosophy of volunteerism and the role of the professional in volunteerism and the role of the professional in the 1980's.

Areas to be covered in this statement may include:

- An awareness of local, state, and/or national changes you have witnessed since you entered the field, along with significant causal factors.
- The challenges you have faced or imperatives you have identified as you have worked within the field.
- A working definition of the meaning of volunteerism for your community and the country.
- An understanding of the concepts of "volunteerism" and "voluntarism," their likenesses, differences and relationship.
- The evolution of the role of the professional in relation to the field.
- An awareness of historical perspectives, current trends and projected changes in the field.

Leave space here so that you can come back later and indicate in which of your performance narratives you have provided examples of some of the more difficult and/or interesting efforts you have made to implement your philosophy in your work.



## Performance Narratives

### Writing Narratives

A narrative is a written report of an event in which you were involved as a manager in volunteer administration with some responsibility for the outcome. The narrative is to be a self-critical record of your role in the event, including the decisions you made, the actions you took, what you did well and what could have been improved. The purpose of writing the narratives is to provide evidence of satisfactory or better performance on a representative sample of professional competencies.

Please select work projects or programs to describe which occurred during the past five years. (Written permission for exceptions must be obtained from the Certification Assessment Panel.)

Sections III through VI of the portfolio correspond to one or more of the Functional Areas in the Self-Assessment Checklist.

### Required Format for Narratives

- A. The narrative should be no more than 1000 words (except where indicated) typed, double spaced pages. A concise style in writing your narrative is strongly encouraged.
- B. The narrative must have four parts, each appropriately labeled. The parts need not be equal in length.
  1. **Background:** Enough information to set the event in context. What community and/or organizational needs were involved in this event; when or how you became aware of/involved in the event; what pressures and/or persons precipitated the event.
  2. **Description:** What you did and what actually happened, and what role you played. (Report in as much detail as feasible, given the overall word count limitation.) Be sure to clearly and fully address the performance criteria as listed in the self-assessment checklist. Do not include performance criteria unless you can document satisfactory performance.
  3. **Analysis:** Identify issues, and cause and effect relationships. Explain why you handled the situation in the way described. Try to answer the question: What was going on here?
  4. **Outcome and Results:** This section allows you to evaluate the event and your own effectiveness in managing the situation. Did you do what you set out to do? How do you know? What tangible and intangible results can you point to? In what ways did you function effectively? In what ways could your performance have been improved? What factors or forces emerged which you did not anticipate?

- C. Make every effort to document each performance criteria only once, providing whatever description is necessary in only one location in the portfolio rather than sprinkling documentation for a given performance criteria across one or more narratives. Do not include a performance criteria unless you can document satisfactory performance on all parts of that criteria.

### Products and Letters of Verification

As you assemble your portfolio and develop your performance narratives, you are creating documentation of your work experiences. As you write each narrative, you will be pointing to the results or outcomes of the experience and you may also be describing products, i.e. booklets, forms, brochures, produced by you, by you and others, or under your close supervision (please specify which, for each product mentioned) in that work experience.

The Certification Assessment Panel will request specific products and letters of verification referred to in your narrative. In order to make appropriate requests, list the documentation available to substantiate your narrative at the end of each narrative.

**DO NOT SEND ANY DOCUMENTATION UNTIL REQUESTED BY THE PANEL.**

Examples of Products: Intake interview forms, volunteer personnel policies, a project plan, a project report, a budget, a grant proposal, an annual report, a written evaluation, a recruitment plan, promotional materials, position listings, position descriptions, form letters used with prospective and/or working volunteers, a recognition event program, materials used to organize or develop one or more meeting programs for a local association of those in volunteer administration, etc.

Letters of Verification: It is suggested that you seek permission before putting an individual's name as reference. It is also recommended should the panel request a letter, you give a copy of your narrative to the individual so they might give a proper perspective to your role and performance.

Always include the names of one or more individuals who, if asked to do so would be a) competent to write and b) willing to write a letter of verification concerning your role and the quality of your performance in that narrative.

Most often the individual would be someone you reported to in the project described in the narrative, someone in authority in your organization (such as the chair of the board) or an experienced volunteer administrator or general manager involved in or closely with the project.

Such letters should be brief, written on letterhead; mention exact dates, your position title and their position title in relation to the project; and state the credentials of the individual writing the letter. For example:

The Executive Director, for three years, of the organization where the applicant has been employed for the past five years, direct supervisor of the applicant, and trained and qualified in public relations.

or

The Chair of the Board of the organization (for two years) where the applicant undertook the project, who is vice president of a public relations firm.

The situation that this person is verifying or the complete narrative in which the situation occurs must be duplicated from the portfolio and attached to the letter. Each page from the portfolio must be signed by the author of the letter. The letter must be sent directly from the verifying party to AVA, Certification Assessment Panel, P.O. Box 4584, Boulder, CO 80306.

Other Examples of Verification: Newspaper (and other media) accounts of a project, preferably mentioning you by name. Audio or video tapes of important meetings or of parts of a program, such as a training session, where you played a significant role.

### **Section III: Management Narratives (Functional Areas I, II, and III)**

Select two distinct examples of work projects or programs occurring during the past five years which you initiated, planned, and implemented. This could include creating a job and/or department where one did not exist before. Describe those actions which verify that you have performed at least 75% of the performance criteria included in these three functional areas. (I. Program Planning and Organization, II. Staffing and Directing, and III. Controlling) at a satisfactory or better level of competence. Use prescribed format.

### **Section IV: Behavioral Narratives (Functional Area IV)**

With a focus on your interpersonal behavior and human relations skills describe a work situation which verifies your performance of 75% of the performance criteria in this area (IV. Individual, Group and Organizational Behavior) at a satisfactory or better level of competence. Use prescribed format.

You may use the same or different work situations as those described in the Management Narratives; however, if you choose one of the same work situations the narrative must be described in such a way as to clearly emphasize the behavioral aspects of the situation.

### **Section V: Grounding in the Profession Narratives (Functional Area V)**

The skills outlined in this section are among those which help to differentiate the technician from the professional in volunteer administration. The performance criteria involve a knowledge base which seeks expression in decisions made, actions taken, and time expended. Conclude each of these narratives with the name of someone who could write a letter of verification supporting your knowledge in that particular area.

### **A.: External Regulations Affecting Volunteerism**

Demonstrating at least three of the five performance criteria in this section, develop a narrative, not to exceed 500 words, recounting how you have applied this area of competence in your work.

Example #1: A volunteer administrator in a nursing home may want to cite knowledge of Federal Medicare Guidelines (performance criterion V.A.2.), and where these guidelines may be secured (performance criterion V.A.3.). Most important would be to articulate the practical implications of these guidelines for volunteer programming (performance criterion V.A.4.) in his or her organization and in other nursing homes (that is, the nursing home industry, generally).

Example #2: A director of a voluntary health organization may choose to focus on performance criterion V.A.5., regulations governing lobbying done by voluntary organizations. The narrative could relate the implication of this knowledge to performance criteria V.A.2./3./and 4.

(We have noted the individual competencies to assist in the preparation of your narratives.)

### **B.: History, Philosophy, Trends**

A focus on professional ethics in volunteer administration is the key task in this narrative. That is, performance criteria V.B.3. must be addressed. It is assumed that performance criteria V.B.1. and performance criteria V.B.4. are largely addressed in the Philosophy of Volunteerism Statement, Section II of the portfolio. In a narrative not to exceed 500 words, the candidate is to select a current trend or issue in volunteer administration and discuss it in relation to the AVA statement on professional ethics.

Example: The candidate might discuss volunteers replacing paid staff and relate this concern to Principle 3—Self Determination, and Principle 5—Staff Relationships, from the AVA Statement of Professional Ethics.

### **C.: Knowledge of the Profession**

Relate your work performance to at least five of the six performance criteria from this group of performance standards. The nature of these performance criteria lend themselves to brief outline formats. You may single space this material. Do not exceed three typed pages.

Example: Performance criteria V.C.3. concerns periodicals in volunteer administration. It could be satisfied by listing the periodicals you regularly read and briefly identifying the relationship between specific articles and aspects of your current (or past) positions in volunteer administration.

### **Section VI. Individualized Additional Competency Narrative (Functional Area VI.)**

Documentation of this competency and its performance criteria may be submitted in one of two ways:

- A. You may write a narrative not to exceed 500 words, describing a work situation which demonstrates your satisfactory performance of this self-defined area. Use the four part format required for narratives described earlier. Illustrate all three individualized performance criteria in this narrative.

or

- B. You may integrate this competency and all three of its performance criteria with any one of the management or behavioral narratives you have already written.

### Section VII. Career and Development Objectives

This section asks you to prepare three written statements:

- A. A "letter of recommendation" for yourself, indicating both key strengths and limitations.
- B. A statement of career and development objectives for the next 2 to 5 years, indicating how you intend to enhance your strengths and how you will improve areas of relative weakness. (You are encouraged to include one or two alternative career plan scenarios, here.)
- C. A self-assessment of the portfolio.

Your submission for this section should not exceed 1000 words in length for all three parts combined.

A. A competent professional is aware of his or her adequacies and inadequacies and utilizes this type of self-assessment information as a foundation for both general career planning and specific development planning to support the achievement of career objectives. The ability to capitalize on strengths is as important as the ability to overcome or accommodate relative weaknesses, in this process. Please write a "letter of recommendation" for yourself summarizing both your key strengths and add your areas of weakness, and how both are generally handled by you in your professional work.

B. Professionals in volunteer administration, as in any profession, should be involved in ongoing professional development activities. Part of this effort involves developing and continually refining career plans. Part of it involves developing specific skills and acquiring particular areas of knowledge. We ask that you demonstrate your commitment to and involvement in continuing professional development by sharing your career objectives and specific developmental objectives for the next 2 to 5 years. While not viewed as a rigid set of chains, these plans will serve as a springboard for (and context within which to view) your application for recertification, five years following the date of certification.

If you have never really taken the time to develop some career plans, we ask that you do so now. Or if you have done some planning in the past, but have not

taken as much care or treated the whole question of career development with as much depth as you would like, this is an opportunity to take the care and pursue that depth.

It turns out that to do much in the way of career planning, it is necessary to do some in-depth self-assessment. Assessing your competencies with the help of a listing like the one that forms the basis for this program of certification is a start. But self-assessment also involves identifying your other strengths, your interests, your values, the things that have meaning for you, life style preferences, learning style preferences, and short and longer term life and career goals and objectives.

It is necessary to do another kind of assessment, as well, some research about the environment in which you are (or want to be) operating, to find out more about what's needed, what's possible, and what other people think is important.

We recommend that you use some of the many resources available to support this kind of planning, such as the I CAN Volunteer Development Resources.<sup>\*</sup> The I CAN materials are published by the American Red Cross in behalf of an interorganizational collaboration of national voluntary organizations. The I CAN Collaboration, of which AVA is a member, developed these resources for use by the entire volunteer community. Though packaged so as to be attractive to volunteers, they are equally useful to paid personnel. Such resources are recyclable. That is, we can keep coming back to them again and again as we pursue our careers, for use in our own development efforts, and to support the development efforts of those we work with.

This section should be devoted to the future evolution of your career in this field, as best you can project that future. Providing two or three "alternative" scenarios is an acceptable and realistic way of approaching your description of "the future."

C. Give your self-assessment of your work in this portfolio. Rank order the six functional areas, the philosophy statement, and this section, from the area of greatest strength to the area of least strength, and defend the ranking.

#### **Case Analysis and Review** (if requested)

Following the submission of your completed portfolio to the Certification Assessment Panel, you may receive a case study for analysis and review. It will consist of a hypothetical situation which could be encountered in the practice of volunteer administration. You will be expected to carefully consider the situation and respond to it in writing, explaining how you would handle this situation if encountered in your work, and the rationale for the response you select.

Your response will be judged using the following criteria:

1. Clarity of thought evidenced
2. Analytical thinking evidenced
3. Ability to draw logical conclusions
4. Ability to express ideas in writing.

## How to Avoid Pitfalls

This chapter is meant to provide some help to you as you prepare your portfolio. The potential pitfalls covered here have been encountered by past candidates for certification. Some may not be of concern to you. If a section doesn't fit, simply skip it. But we do strongly encourage you to skim the entire chapter and to look rather closely at the section on narratives.

### Getting Started

It is true that putting together a portfolio is a sizable task. For some people, the hardest part is getting started. Even if you do a lot of writing in your work, the portfolio probably calls for a different kind of writing, and for some that makes it harder to begin.

One good way to start is to outline each section of the portfolio. For the narrative sections, jot down ideas about projects that might be good to describe, points to be made, key events that relate to the performance criteria in that functional area of competence, etc. Note also, things you are proud of, problem areas you encountered, products you could submit, and some of the people who might be able to write letters of verification. When a lot of answers are easy to come by for a particular project, it's probably a good one to choose for that set of competencies and performance criteria. Then go back and organize your thoughts and performance criteria. Then go back and organize your thoughts according to the four part format described on page 10. Attempt to outline the information requested for each of the four parts.

Continue the outlining process for all sections of the portfolio. What it does is help you to get a sense of the overall project, what you have, and what you need (both what will be easy to come up with, and what will be difficult to come up with). The important thing is not to allow yourself to get blocked when you can't remember something or when you encounter a potential problem. Keep going. Finish the entire outline. Then go back and start to fill in the spaces.

To flesh out the details of a narrative, it often helps to do a more detailed outline before jumping in to craft sentences and paragraphs. When you do go back to fill in the holes, it can help if a friend interviews you, taking down your responses in your words and drawing you out with clarifying questions.

The same approach can be used with the actual drafting and redrafting of your narratives, philosophy statement, and career/development plans. "Bull" your way through early drafts. Make notes about wording problems and any missing information. Then go back and fill in the spaces.

The peer group could help in this area.

### Following the Format

The instructions ask that you follow the prescribed format closely. Following the format allows advisers and reviewers to concentrate on the substance of your

work rather than on finding things. If you make it easy for a reader to find things and to determine if you have done all of what you were asked to do, the reader will have more time to think about what you have said and done and you are probably going to get a better response and better feedback.

### **Effective Narratives**

**A Self-Critical Evaluation, Not a How To Manual:** Address your narratives to an experienced colleague, not to someone who doesn't know how to perform the function in question. Be sure to point out what could have been improved, not just what was done well.

**Written in the First Person, Not the Third Person:** We need to know what you did, why, and how well. Include how you worked with and through other people. Don't describe things as if they happened spontaneously without anyone making them happen. Keep background information to a minimum.

**Written Professionally, With a Sense of Options, Not As If There Were Only One Way to Do Things:** Share some of the options you considered and your reasons for making the choices you made. Describe problems as challenges and as opportunities to find creative solutions, not as wearisome burdens or ways you were victimized. Write in the past tense, describing actual rather than hypothetical performance.

**Gives Specifics and Examples, Not Vague, Unsupported Generalizations:** Examples can be especially convincing in this kind of writing. Keep them concise. Make sure they really do illustrate the points they are intended to support. And keep them coming.

**Specifies Results of Volunteer Administration, Not of Volunteer Services:** Be sure to specify results mainly in terms of the results of volunteer administration practices rather than the result of services to the public that such practices make possible.

**Products and Potential Sources of Verification are Listed:** Evaluation of your portfolio will be delayed significantly if you forget to list products you could share and people who could write letters of verification (along with their role and relationship to the situation described in the narrative).

### **Effective Philosophy Statements**

**Are Substantial, Not Motherhood and Apple Pie:** Take a stand in relation to issues facing the field. Again, address experienced professional peers, not people who are new to the field. Address volunteer administration, not just volunteerism.

**Are Well Qualified, Not Full of Extreme Overgeneralizations:** Overgeneralizations often betray disrespect for people you should be able to understand and work with, lack of knowledge, or sloppy thinking. The effect can be most unprofessional. Otherwise insightful statements can be undermined by a lack of just one or two words of qualification.



**Are Personal Statements, Not a String of Quotes:** Share your opinions here. Include what motivates your own personal involvement in the field. Deal with the issues you most care about.

### **Sound Adviser/Advisee Relationships—Peer Group Support**

**Deal with Time Problems, Don't Avoid Them:** Whether it is the candidate or the adviser, time problems need to be shared and negotiated as soon as you become aware of them. It is far better to change meeting times, change advisers, or modify your schedule of completion than to continue with a series of canceled or missed appointments.

**Are Characterized by Ample, Useful Feedback; Not by Avoidance of Feedback, Particularly Avoidance of Critical Comments:** It is evident that no matter how much we emphasize its importance, some advisers find it hard to confront candidates with glaring deficiencies in their portfolios. We recommend you do everything in your power to be receptive to honest feedback and to convey that receptivity to your adviser. It can help to negotiate how feedback and particularly difficult feedback will be exchanged, at the outset. For example, do you prefer feedback in writing or orally; in a sequence where strengths are pointed out first and block to strengths second, or some other sequence? Let your adviser know. If you don't seem to be getting the feedback you need, even after such negotiations, ask for it. And if necessary, change your adviser.

**Are Characterized by Advocacy, Not Good Wishes:** If you are having trouble securing products or verification letters, ask your adviser for help in dealing with individuals who don't seem to be understanding what is wanted or aren't being cooperative. Ask them to play the role of advocate in relation to AVA, if you feel a lack of understanding on our part.

## CHAPTER 4: PHILOSOPHY OF VOLUNTEERISM ESSAYS

### SELECTED "PHILOSOPHY OF VOLUNTEERISM" ESSAYS FROM COLLEAGUES "CERTIFIED IN VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION"

As part of the application process to become "certified in volunteer administration," candidates are expected to articulate a personal philosophy of volunteerism in an essay of less than 1,000 words. This essay becomes the foundation for the "portfolio" developed by each candidate to demonstrate her or his competencies in volunteer management. After reviewing many portfolios, the Association for Volunteer Administration's Assessment Panel began to realize that many of the Philosophy of Volunteerism essays were provocative and worthy of sharing with others.

At the same time, AVA began receiving requests for "sample" essays to assist new Certification candidates in writing their own philosophies. After some discussion, it was determined that THE JOURNAL OF VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION was the best vehicle for sharing these essays with our colleagues in volunteer leadership.

Therefore, we are delighted to present here six essays, reprinted with the permission of each of their authors (since Certification portfolios are confidential documents), that provide both similar and very different perspectives on what volunteerism is all about. The essays are, by definition, personal. Each represents an attempt to define our evolving field.

While these Philosophy of Volunteerism essays were chosen for publication because the Assessment Panel felt they had merit (both in terms of content and of writing style), their appearance here should not be taken as an "endorsement." There is no one, final or absolute statement of philosophy for our field. Rather, we are all reaching towards a statement that permits us to communicate with one another on common ground and that guides our actions as professionals and as individuals.

From time to time THE JOURNAL will continue to publish other "Philosophy of Volunteerism" essays—which also ask candidates to comment on the "Role of the Volunteer Administrator." We hope that these first six will prove interesting and valuable to the continuing development of our challenging field.

—Editor

### SUZANNE LAWSON, CVA Director of Regional Services Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario

My personal philosophy of volunteerism is based on two somewhat related understandings of life: one, that individuals are reservoirs of skills, insights, experiences, "gifts," which they need to identify and use in order to truly be themselves; and two, that our world is full of people who need, from others, their skills, their caring, their support. I think that volunteerism is the major way, if not the only way, that these two compatible beliefs can be put together.

The professional in volunteer administration, whether volunteer or staff, is the one who is in the best position to link people with gifts of skill and time and love with those who need what they can give. And the professional volunteer ad-

ministrator is also the one who, by affirming and/or critiquing the way the gift is given, can help the giver grow and develop in competence and in confidence.

The trouble is that none of this is easy. Human beings, especially women I believe, have great difficulty understanding that they have something worthwhile to share. Therefore, I see that the task of the volunteer administrator is to carefully and realistically help individuals and groups decipher what they can do/give well already and, even more, what they may learn to do after some training and with some support. Similarly, human beings in need are often not clear about what they really need; society is not of one mind

about how help should be given.

It seems to me that the volunteer administrator again needs to be skilled enough to organize a response to the need which will truly help the situation. And, because human interaction is rarely uncomplicated, the volunteer administrator is required to manage the linking of the giver and the need with dexterity, perception, and compassion. She/he must, above all, be the one who can keep a sense of perspective on the interaction.

Over the past three years, I have been studying and puzzling away at the concept of gifts—and why women in particular frequently appear unable to identify and acknowledge their gifts (talents, skills) and use them for good in the world. The conclusions I'm reaching here are that we avoid recognizing our gifts (indeed, don't *expect* to have them) because we've been brought up not to boast, because we've been socialized to put ourselves last, and because we're afraid of accepting the responsibility that goes along with having gifts—and here I get theological—of using those gifts for God's work in the world. While these reasons apply to women especially, they fit men to a somewhat lesser degree.

Volunteer administrators can help in the recognition and wise use of people's gifts in several ways:

1. By being partners with the individual in the search, by not jumping to identify only the one skill needed by the organization but by joining in a long-term search for all the skills. This becomes a shared human pursuit, not a filling of slots which demeans rather than uplifts the volunteer.
2. By providing support, particularly at the beginning of a task which is calling on tentative skills. And, by pulling back when it is clear that the skill is there in full force.
3. By always treating the volunteer as an individual with specific needs and attributes. Recognition of detailed contributions; discussions about feelings relative to tasks; concern about stretching and promotional opportunities (even if into other organizations) all help.

As a volunteer administrator in a large voluntary organization, I find this attention to an individual volunteer's gifts very difficult to give, but I strive to do what I can and to model this process in staff relationships so that they, as volunteer administrators themselves, will take up these responsibilities.

Volunteerism has become, I'm afraid, a tool of the bandwagon approach to need. If a need, or a *perceived* need, can be sold to the public, the do-gooders around will leap to assist the cause. Volunteers motivated by the good will to help, can be manipulated into helping a cause that is not best served by the particular kind of help offered. I see more and more of this (perhaps there is no more, simply that I see it better now). The misguided missionary movement sees its contemporary counterpart in food collections for disaster areas which either never make it to the folk who need food, or which contain food suitable only for North American bellies; in slum clean-ups that leave impoverished people without shelter; in fund raising for research that will help only a tiny percentage of the population even if a total cure is found.

Our capacity via global media coverage to *see* and *feel* people in outrageous need, our willingness to respond with time and money, has done some good, some evil, and has wasted an inordinate number of volunteer and staff hours, and millions of dollars. And, I think, over all, this has made cynics (no longer willing to give money or time) out of far too many people.

Volunteerism is a powerful tool and it must be mobilized with the utmost care.

A volunteer administrator can help bring wisdom to the forefront:

1. By questioning the level of need—through direct interviews with potential recipients of help if possible, or by researching the situation in detail.
2. By asking potential recipients to be involved in the creation of an appropriate response to the need. People should not be "put upon," but "worked with."
3. By questioning sharply the organiza-

tion she/he works for if it ignores the two previous suggested responses.

Although the organization I work for is not a service-oriented organization, it does use untold volunteer hours to raise money for research and educational programs. I have tried to function as a subtle in-house critic of its method of awarding research grants, the focus of its educational programs, and its use of committed volunteers to achieve both. By asking, arguing, and working for organizational change in the relatively few areas that needed change, I now am quite comfortable about inviting volunteers to join a good cause and a good organization, and also can, in conscience, ask potential donors for money. However, I expect the role of organizational gadfly is one I will continue to play, and I look for and respond to that particular quality in other volunteers or staff. It is a difficult role for someone in a key management position, but it's a role which is well worth holding on to, in my mind.

The volunteer administrator is caught right in the middle of a balancing act. In trying to make the organization a wonderful place for the volunteer to use his/her gifts, the volunteer administrator can lose sight of the primary mission of the organization. In trying to get a task done that is central to the organization's health, the volunteer administrator can forget the needs of the volunteer.

The volunteer administrator can live on this tightrope:

1. By constantly asking what a wise use of time is, given the organization's role, and by redirecting enthusiastic volunteers who get carried away with

peripheral matters. If the volunteer cannot be redirected, and if the excursion is not harmful, the volunteer administrator needs to use his/her own time wisely and simply not devote time to the minor task or the volunteer who engaged in it.

2. By nurturing and caring for the volunteer, and then by getting on with the job to be done. An over-use of nurture and support demeans the volunteer. A get-down-to-business approach gives the volunteer an awareness of purpose. It's the old task/maintenance tension.
3. By sharing leadership of volunteers and of projects or programs with others, even with volunteers(!), from whom one can encourage honest feedback, and with whom one can discuss dilemmas.
4. By always remembering that there is a tension between volunteers' needs and organizational needs, and that there is no easy route to follow to relieve oneself from managing in the tension, and managing the tension itself.

Because of the complexities involved in responding appropriately to the above challenges, the professional volunteer administrator, who is at the hub of the activity, needs to be in constant pursuit of knowledge, skill, sensitivity and experience in order to learn how the task of managing the people and the process can be better done. I do not think it is good enough to be a well-intentioned amateur in this milieu.

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**CONNIE SKILLINGSTAD, CVA**  
**Volunteer Coordinator**  
**St. Joseph's Home for Children**  
**Minneapolis, MN**

While my philosophy of volunteerism and volunteer administration has evolved over the past fifteen years I have spent in the field, it in many ways remains unchanged from my childhood, when I re-

ceived my first taste of volunteering. I have gained in the skill and knowledge of how to unleash the motivation within individuals to participate actively in our society and work to make a difference,

but my basic belief about what volunteerism is and why it survives reflects my parents' commitment to freedom and democracy.

Volunteerism embodies that spirit of free will and sharing that individuals bring to the many activities of life and which enables those individuals to gain a sense of fulfillment and worthwhileness from those activities. In its broadest sense, therefore, volunteerism is anything we do of our own volition, out of a God-given free will.

Much, if not most volunteering, is still done on an informal basis, neighbor to neighbor, friend to friend, and family member to family member. Although not always designated or identified by those participating as "volunteering," these activities contain that same spirit of giving and sharing/helping that fits an all-encompassing definition.

The receipt of salary, stipend, or other tangible benefits is basically irrelevant. There are many persons within a paid career who bring to that career the same spirit of freely giving of time, talents and commitment as those who receive no pay. The definition of "volunteer" is more clearly understood in the context of an attitude or expression of values than through defining tangible rewards. We are all aware of people who do only what is required on a job and work 9 to 5, especially as we contrast them to those who go the extra mile to see a job through to a successful conclusion.

Ideally, we would be able to operate fully as an informal voluntary society. However, in a society, a world society, as large and mobile as ours and which contains a great division between people, culturally, economically, geographically, and ideologically, the spontaneous person-to-person helping of our American roots does not reach far enough. There is a need for organized efforts to reach the poor, starving, alienated, and disenfranchised of our world, those unable to reach out to others except through formal mechanisms. These organized efforts are able to link those in need with those who have the needed skills or resources to share, and who are able to provide advocacy. In addition, many services, such as those of educational or cultural value, are

most effectively and efficiently provided through a formalized structure.

Our society is increasingly complex and social systems have become increasingly impersonal through computerization and systems development. People have a greater need for personal contact than ever before because of isolation they experience. The transience of our communities requires that there be systems for linking people to one another.

The organizing of volunteers for service, advocacy and leadership is an outgrowth of these needs. Volunteers formed the roots of most human service professions and disciplines including social work, public education, corrections, medicine, and many more. Over the years, these organizing efforts have resulted in a body of knowledge and a profession currently called volunteer administration/management.

Although with the advent of many professions, volunteering fell into disrepute, the last fifteen years have seen unprecedented growth in needs for volunteers. As we deal with an incredible national debt and thus a shortage of funds to pay for needed services, I have seen the expansion of efforts to involve volunteers especially in the not-for-profit sector. Although I have seen some organizations try to do this without the professional volunteer administrator, I have more often seen them recognize their need for a well-organized program.

It has also become apparent that many services are provided more effectively and efficiently by the unpaid worker. The value to the recipient who knows that the person helping them is doing so because they want to rather than because "it's their job" has immeasurable impact on self esteem. The children we serve at St. Joseph's Home for Children, where I manage the volunteer program, have experienced rejection by family, serious emotional and physical abuse, and an uncaring community. Volunteers, more than anything, let the children know that there is a community that does care what happens to them and reaches out to touch their lives and make a difference.

The paid staff person who provides service out of this same spirit or attitude, achieves the same outcome. What I am

getting at, is that the stipend, salary, expense reimbursement or even court requirement of restitution have little bearing on the commitment of the "volunteer." The committed staff and committed volunteer, however they get to your agency, have much more in common than those who do their work out of a sense of duty or for their paycheck.

Individually, our choice of volunteer activity, like (hopefully) our choice of vocation, is based on our goals and dreams, stage in life, level of personal/professional development and other needs. At any given time, we will choose differently. We will choose those activities which help us to achieve those goals, experience growth, and meet needs for belonging, accomplishment, status, creativity, and so on.

We continue to engage in those activities (again hopefully) only as long as they meet a need. Sometimes people continue beyond that time out of a sense of obligation, fear of change, lack of awareness of needs, or complicating life situations. When this happens, I believe that the spirit of volunteerism is diminished. Frequently, the person stops feeling fulfilled in the work and stagnates (does only what's required), decides to make that change, or finds another way to refuel his/her commitment at the same position, through job enrichment, etc. Many of the people I see in our volunteer program are those who have been unable to find that sense of self worth or fulfillment in their paid work and yet are unable to leave that work for many reasons. They are also those who had to make a choice for economic reasons and otherwise might have chosen differently.

Another aspect of volunteerism which I see as significant more recently relates to the rapidity of change in our society. People are becoming more and more accustomed to change and are looking to change their volunteer and paid "careers" more frequently than in previous times. While there are still some twenty-year people around, they are few and far between. People change their loyalties and priorities frequently today. We as professionals must be cognizant of the needs of those who come to us to volunteer and place them in appropriate settings.

There are many more opportunities to volunteer and issues/causes in which people can and want to be involved than ever before. People frequently want to move to levels of increased responsibility, authority and influence or to jobs that more effectively address their needs. It is important that we make such opportunities available. Some volunteer work requires specialized skills and training, while other types serve as a means of transiting to a new career by giving opportunity to learn skills. Some enables individuals to move from formal education to actual practice of a profession.

The role of the professional in volunteer administration is to manage this entire process and to encourage and evaluate it. We are the keepers of standards and ethics of involvement. It is further the role of the volunteer administrator to engage the individual and group in a process of identifying their goals and needs and matching them with volunteer opportunities/activities that will help them to meet those goals. My greatest sense of achievement comes when I see volunteers achieve that sense of fulfillment.

In managing this process, the volunteer administrator must attain and exercise skills in defining the needs of clients and agencies which can be met by the unpaid worker and those which must be paid responsibilities. Further, the volunteer administrator must have skills from a variety of disciplines including personnel, training and development, program management, public relations, financial management, supervision, and so on.

Most importantly, the volunteer administrator must encourage/nurture that spirit of volunteerism in all whom they encounter (paid staff and volunteers as well as informal relationships). To do this, I believe that we must possess that spirit of volunteerism within ourselves, must be willing to help others get unstuck when their volunteer or paid jobs stop being fulfilling or are not the rights ones for them, and must be willing to model these values and attitudes.

The professional volunteer administrator must commit him or herself to learning that body of knowledge that exists for the profession and to developing skills.

The role of the volunteer administrator requires awareness and practice of a particular code of ethics (such as articulated by AVA), and to meeting a basic level of work which reflects standards set by the field.

Although we are still struggling in some ways to prove we are a profession, we have come a very long way. The view of our profession is changing from within and without. It must continue to change if we are to reach our full potential and the

volunteer potential can be fully realized. We in the field must advocate for this through education of those with whom we come in contact wherever possible and by manifesting the best our profession has to offer. Such programs as AVA's certification program give us the tools to evaluate and upgrade our profession. We as Individuals must use these tools and develop more.

It is truly the most exciting field around.

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### **KATHLEEN M. CURTIS, CVA** **Milwaukee Public Museum**

In this statement on my philosophy of volunteerism and the role of the professional in volunteerism or volunteer administration, I will be focusing on several key ideas that are fundamental to my personal view toward volunteerism and my career. These ideas are: 1) my personal motives and volunteerism; 2) understanding the role of volunteerism in the midst of societal changes and challenges; 3) involving untapped sources of volunteers; and 4) my responsibilities as a professional in volunteer administration.

Until I had this opportunity to put my philosophy toward volunteerism in writing, I had done very little to analyze my feelings in any depth or to develop a definition of volunteerism. I am by nature much more of a "doer" than a "thinker," and until recently did not spend much time trying to understand my personal motivations for volunteering. As I reflect on my teen years, I volunteered primarily as a result of the role I played in my family as the oldest of five children. I was usually the one to take charge, make decisions, and in general help out whenever I was needed. I believe that when I entered high school, I volunteered largely because my identity had been built around being the service provider and care-giver. At the time, I did not realize that I was gaining social and career skills, a great deal of self-confidence, and future job references.

When I began my college years I continued to volunteer, but for different reasons. I sought out experiences that

would help me decide which career field I wanted to pursue, that would help me build a good resume, and also provide a chance to meet people of my own age and interests.

After I graduated from college and began to work, I once again experienced a change in my motivation for volunteering. I became deeply involved in Girl Scouting, partly out of my own interest in the out-of-doors, but largely because I wanted to return to Scouting what it had given me. Scouting had been a very important part of my youth, and I had a desire to help other girls through Scouting. I began to view volunteerism as a way to give to others.

Since that time, I have been involved in a wide variety of community service activities, and I have been motivated by a combination of many of my previous reasons for volunteering. I volunteer in order to use my skills to help others, to meet new people, and to feel a sense of belonging and achievement. I need to feel that I am contributing to my community and volunteer work allows me to do so in a very direct and meaningful way. I am motivated by my need to meet the needs of others and my need to make an impact on society.

I have been writing about my personal development because I think that an understanding of my motivations and growth in volunteerism is essential to an understanding of and empathy toward the volunteers I work with every day. I believe that I can understand and accept

the motivations of other volunteers because I have volunteered for just about as many reasons as anyone! I believe that each person's reason for volunteering is valid, and none is "better" than another. People's motives for volunteering will depend on where they are in their personal life and what their needs are at the moment. Their motives will change as these needs are met and as they grow.

All volunteers seem to have a certain spirit in common. Although each individual may have a different motivation, all share a spirit of good will, generosity, willingness to serve, and optimism. Whether this spirit is expressed through small, unplanned acts of kindness or through larger-scale, well-organized activities, voluntary action is a basic component of a healthy adult and citizen-involved community.

In my opinion, voluntary actions are self-directed ones which an individual or group of people chooses to do without financial reimbursement for their contributions of time and talent. I feel that the voluntary movement in our country stems from the interests of individuals and the motivation of those individuals to help make our society a better place to live. When a person has a concern about an issue or community need, and he/she takes action to make change happen, that individual is part of the entire voluntary movement which is vital in our country. Volunteerism is a vehicle through which people not only voice their concerns or opinions but actually behave in a way which moves toward solving societal problems. Volunteerism plays an important role in our society by allowing anyone who cares enough to get involved, play a role in decision-making processes, and meet human needs.

Just as my personal development in volunteerism changed as I grew, society also has experienced changes in its volunteer force through time. It is vital that volunteer administrators recognize these changes and turn them into opportunities for growth. One of the most recent changes, the movement of women to the paid workforce, has resulted in a particular challenge for volunteer recruiters. The traditional mainstay of the volunteer force has been the homemaker, and as she en-

tered the workforce, many organizations have had to change their major source of volunteers. This challenge caused agencies to begin to look for new, untapped sources of volunteers, and resulted in a terrific opportunity to incorporate new individuals with a wide variety of management and technological skills into volunteer programs. Since many of these "new" volunteers work at full-time paid positions, we in volunteer programs need to change and adjust our schedules to meet their availability. Once we do this, we have a highly energetic and skilled resource to involve in our programs. One interesting aside is that many of the "traditional" volunteers who are now in the workforce are beginning to volunteer in new and challenging positions for them, as a result of their newly-found skills and interests.

As a professional in volunteer administration, I believe that part of my role is to understand volunteer motivation and keep updated on societal changes which affect the volunteer force. However, I feel that my major role as a volunteer administrator is as an advocate for volunteers and volunteerism. I fill my role as an advocate in several ways: 1) by acting as a liaison between staff and volunteers; 2) by matching the interests and needs of the volunteers to meaningful positions for them; and 3) by being a professional in all aspects of my work, thus upgrading the image of volunteerism in general.

As a professional in volunteer administration, I act as a liaison between staff and volunteers on a daily basis. I discuss ethical guidelines for staff regarding the types of work volunteers may be asked to do and in this way protect the rights and interests of the volunteers. I ask volunteers for ideas on their training needs and communicate those ideas to staff members who are in charge of volunteer training courses. I am the person to whom volunteer committees often come first with a new idea and I discuss with them the best way to approach museum administration with their ideas. I also act as a liaison in the case of volunteer concerns about relationships with staff and vice versa. I have confronted a staff member about his difficulty in relating to volunteers, and we have worked together to help change that



relationship for the better.

I act as an advocate for volunteers by helping them match their interests and needs with meaningful positions available at the museum. I do not try to talk new volunteers into accepting a position just because we desperately need someone, but rather offer them a position that will be personally fulfilling, based on what they have told me about themselves. By placing volunteers in positions that match their interests and skills, I am doing my best to help them be successful and satisfied in their work. They are likely to give a great deal of their time and perform their best if they are placed in the right job for them. This good performance raises the image of volunteers in the eyes of museum administration and makes the staff realize that the volunteers are essential to the museum.

Finally, as an advocate for volunteerism, it is especially important for me to be a professional in all aspects of my work. This means being well-organized, knowledgeable, tactful, prepared for

meetings and able to handle situations that arise in an effective and sensitive manner. It means being up-to-date on current trends in volunteerism and issues which affect volunteers.

As a professional, I can play an important role in making it possible for volunteers to be the best they can be and to be viewed as professionals themselves. If I am not a professional in the management of the volunteer program, it is likely that the volunteers will not receive the respect and recognition that they deserve.

In closing, I am pleased to have this opportunity to examine my personal growth and motivations in my own volunteer experiences. It has made me realize how essential it is that volunteer administrators have a well-rounded background in volunteer experiences of their own. Writing this statement of my philosophy has given me an opportunity to clarify my role as an advocate for volunteers and to remind myself of my responsibilities to the volunteers I serve at the museum.

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**JOHN D. MASON, CVA**  
**Director of Volunteer Services**  
**William Temple House**  
**Portland, OR**

From my study of our country's history, I have concluded that the driving spirit of our democracy has been a spirit of volunteerism in which citizens played an active role in addressing social problems and humanitarian issues. In the beginning decades of our history, this spirit took the form of neighbor helping neighbor in times of need or neighbors working together on projects such as building a town hall or putting out a fire. With the advent of the Industrial Revolution and as life in our country started to become more complex and impersonal, volunteers formed themselves into local and regional groups to more effectively address human and social needs, capped by forming national organizations.

Although these volunteers came from many economic classes, different races, both sexes, and worked on projects that

addressed a wide range of philosophical ideas, the public image of volunteers was primarily one of white, well-to-do women "doing good." Since volunteering was something wealthy white women did with idle hours, affluent white men who volunteered were seen to be doing their "civic duty," while still other groups of volunteers were seen to be doing their "Christian duty," speaking out for justice, or simply being neighborly. Most volunteer endeavors, by whatever name, were not viewed as work, but as something to do with "extra" time. These early volunteers did what they deemed prudent and necessary without much concern for the status of their work or of volunteerism. Their primary thought was to right an immediate wrong or to make changes in certain social conditions.

In many ways, I believe today's volun-

teers are no different from volunteers of twenty, fifty, or one hundred years ago. Often, they are still concerned to right wrongs and to contribute to changes in social conditions which will improve the quality of life for all citizens. However, I have observed a subtle, yet no less dramatic change in how volunteers view their activities and themselves as volunteers. As this change has evolved, I have observed firsthand how volunteers view their activities as volunteer endeavors, efforts which involve meaningful work, not just a means of utilizing leisure time.

Volunteers are beginning to recognize that they can use some of their discretionary time to help others in ways that will also provide for themselves significant benefits or compensations. Also, volunteers are beginning to see that organizations have responsibilities toward them, and that they, in turn, have responsibilities toward the organization and the people that they serve. There have been many influences which have sparked this evolution: increased public understanding and awareness of the tremendous and important contributions volunteerism has made (and is making) to the quality of life in our democratic and pluralistic society; the assertive aspects of the women's movement; the increased number of active, retired people; the decreased Federal government's funding of social programs; the increased awareness of businesses and corporations of the value that volunteerism can afford their employees and company image; and the general increase in discretionary time. As this evolution continues, I believe that the public, as well as volunteers themselves, will view volunteerism as non-salaried employment providing tangible compensation.

Today's volunteers, like myself, are people who freely choose to take an active role in addressing social problems and humanitarian issues through activities that are not their source of livelihood, performing within the context of a formal or informal organization, and functioning in addition to what is expected of all citizens or members of a group. Simply, they are non-salaried employees. Excluded from this, my definition of volunteerism, are those people who volun-

tarily and spontaneously help others, such as "good Samaritans," without the benefit of a structured organization and those people who voluntarily choose to join a group with the purpose of earning their livelihood from that group, such as our U.S. "Volunteer" Army. Although these people are not part of today's volunteerism, such forms of voluntarism, are, nevertheless, needed and appreciated.

There are other groups of people who can be very useful to volunteer organizations, even though they are not to be included in my definition of volunteerism. These groups include people who earn employment or academic credit for doing what is expected of them, and people who are "expected" or coerced by the courts to do community service work. Included in my definition are those people who may receive compensation in forms of stipends, the Peace Corps being one example, or reimbursement for such things as travel, meals or parking, or the waiving of certain fees such as the AVA conference registration fee for those serving on the Planning Committee.

As volunteer activities continue to evolve into recognizable, meaningful endeavors with compensation, I have observed the role of the leader of volunteer programs evolving into a recognizable, meaningful profession requiring definable skills and attitudes.

Today, I realize leaders of volunteer programs must be well-versed in a wide array of administrative skills. They must possess a positive belief in the potential competency of volunteer workers and in the social responsibility for all citizens to actively address social problems and humanitarian issues. People in general and volunteers in particular desire leaders, not managers. Machines are managed. People are led with the art of leadership. Machines need to be "controlled, handled and arranged," while people deserve to be "guided, escorted and directed."

Effective volunteer leadership is not so much the techniques employed, important as they are, as it is the total projected attitude of its leaders, how they feel and what they believe about volunteers, and how they feel and what they believe about themselves. Leaders use them-

selves in a manner that assists volunteers to do something constructive and meaningful with their lives, promoting professionalism in themselves and thus, in others. Professionalism, on the part of leaders and workers alike, is largely a matter of attitude—an attitude of dedication and discipline, an attitude of respect for self and others and for their field, in this instance, volunteerism.

I firmly believe that professionals in the field of today's volunteerism understand that volunteers occupy "paid" positions, positions paying something other than money. Each volunteer's pay is unique. Some are paid with socialization or friendship. Others are paid with improved physical, mental, or spiritual health. Still others are paid with learning more about themselves or acquiring marketable skills. A sense of belonging, of being needed and appreciated, contributing to the betterment of the community, or participating in the work of the church are still other forms in which volunteers get paid. Indeed, they are non-salaried staff who are justly compensated for their work.

My experiences have led me to conclude that in the field of volunteerism, professionals possess an understanding of the basic philosophy, spirit and drive of their organization, how they directly contribute to its mission, and that volunteers deserve to be treated with the same consideration as salaried staff. Volunteers must be involved in the decision-making process which affects their jobs and the quality of the service rendered. Like fellow staff members, they must feel that they are an integral part of a "human unit," valuable members contributing to the organization.

In my view, the professional under-

stands that people must be nurtured to feel a basic sense of job satisfaction. Those people who are recognized, thanked, and treated with respect and dignity enjoy a sense of gratitude. In learning new skills, finding opportunities to socialize, and utilizing their time effectively, volunteers experience fulfillment. Volunteers who participate in the delegation of tasks and responsibilities and who share in the advocacy of the organization feel significance. This sense of job satisfaction is essential in the retention and the productivity of all employees.

Professionals in the field of volunteerism further understand that there are personal responsibilities to exercise honesty and integrity toward self and others while articulating and practicing a consistent philosophy of ethical volunteerism. Conscientiously caring for physical, mental, and spiritual health enhances human dignity and promotes a climate of mutual allegiance. Congruence between an individual's philosophy and the philosophy and practices of his or her organization aids veracity and probity. Pursuit of personal maturation, vocational development, and excellence within one's field amplifies volunteerism. Assuming personal responsibilities strengthens the individual, volunteerism, and society.

It is my belief that the future challenge of volunteerism is to foster a greater awareness for the need of professionalism that exercises accountability while building a mutual obligation of people working together to make the best use of human and natural resources in addressing the issues at hand. As this is accomplished, the spirit of volunteerism will remain the driving spirit of our democracy.

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**GRETCHEN E. STRINGER, CVA**  
**Consultant in Volunteerism**  
**Clarence, NY**

The dictionary definition of "voluntary" is: "done, made, brought about, undertaken, etc., of one's own accord or by free choice." Most of our systems: govern-

ment, education, human service delivery, arts development have all developed voluntarily. Our citizens have gathered themselves together and formed our in-

stitutions. Because of this grass roots, voluntary formation, these institutions are strong and have been lasting.

Which brings us to "Volunteerism." To keep all of these voluntary organizations going, an organizational system has been developed. To make sure that the resources available are being used in the most effective way possible, a field of management of the people, time and money needed has been identified. The competencies necessary for the administration of this field have been identified (see AVA Certification). "Volunteerism" is the word used to identify this relatively new field of management; the organization of volunteer time, energy and expertise (which the volunteer is giving voluntarily).

If the reception of these resources by the organization to which the person has come voluntarily is not well handled then this person's volunteering will not be effective—either to the volunteer or to the organization. The idea that effective volunteerism is not free and that well-trained, well-paid (more on this phrase later) volunteer administrators are an absolute necessity for the life of our organizations is a new one to most people, and basic in our field.

Volunteerism—the giving of volunteer time, energy and expertise—is *alive* and well in our communities and our country and this is where my philosophy starts. Not only do I find *volunteerism* alive and well, but I believe that volunteerism is one of the basic reasons why our *country* is alive and well.

America has always depended on its volunteers. Although the shape of the times may have changed in recent years, the actual hours involved and the numbers of people volunteering is no less now than it has ever been (see Gallup Poll, Independent Sector, 1984). In fact, because of the development of the field of Volunteer Administration, the collection of facts about volunteers has gotten more and more sophisticated and we know more and more about the handling of our citizens as volunteers: what makes them want to volunteer (the recruitment), what keeps them volunteering (the retention and recognition), what helps them do the job they've chosen most effec-

tively (the training), what fits them into their chosen organization as an integral part (the administration), and what resources must be tapped for the organization itself to afford them (the funding).

I believe that basic to effective volunteerism is the dissemination of these facts not only to the direct funding sources (foundations, United Ways, government) but to all of our citizens.

Let me go back to the phrase "well paid." This phrase can have two meanings when discussing volunteerism. Within any organization, there will be people administering volunteers who are being "paid" two ways: with money and with other rewards. I will discuss "paid with money" first.

Small organizations might not have any administrators who are paid monetary awards but as an organization expands, needs arise for: a centralization of resources, a continual system of communication, a consistent method of training, a coordination of efforts, and other managerial and administrative functions. The identification of these needs has also arisen from an organization already in existence that sees the new development of a body of volunteers as a necessity for its expanded effectiveness. So whether the recognition of this necessary management of volunteers comes from growth inward or outward, the recognition leads the organization to paid staff. (A small study recently done by the Volunteer Administrators of Western New York would seem to conclude that the better paid the Volunteer Administrator is, the more effective the volunteers in that organization will be.)

Along with this paid staff, the organization already has, or is developing, a corp of volunteers (direct service and administrative) whose rewards will not be monetary but will be other coin. I believe that volunteers *are* paid, but the paycheck is not in money. It has almost as many shapes as there are people volunteering.

There are five main categories of this paycheck of the volunteer. Affiliation, whether for friendship or altruism, is an important reason that people are volunteers. Power, personalized or socialized, is a paycheck without which one might lose many a potential volunteer leader.

The achievement of the goals of an organization is the important thing to some volunteers, as well as the chance to make use of skills already acquired. The fourth, and newest in recognition, of the paychecks is career development. The fifth, without which all the former become flat, is enjoyment.

There are many coins of payment that are a part of all these paychecks, among which are: thanks, security, recognition of the validity of the volunteer's own priorities, and courtesy.

If we want to have a successful volunteer effort with effective volunteers who keep coming back, we need to give each volunteer we administer a paycheck designed with tender loving care geared to his/her own individual needs and requirements.

The relationship of volunteer staff to paid staff is another whole subject—an

extremely important one. I could not complete a statement on my philosophy without saying that the intricacies and interaction of the paid and volunteer staff are often the cornerstone of the health of any organization.

Also the more involved I have become with the world of the volunteer administrator, the more convinced I am that the recognition of the professionalization that AVA stands for is key to effective volunteerism. My philosophy of volunteerism dovetails with the purposes of AVA and with its recognition of the competencies necessary for the effective management and administration of volunteers. The results of this recognition and the dedication to its dispersal into the whole field of community service is being felt in the interest shown in our conferences and in Certification, in both of which I am involved and will continue to be involved.

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**MELSIE WALDNER, RN, CVA**  
**Director of Volunteers**  
**University Hospital**  
**Saskatoon, Saskatchewan**

Volunteers are the essence of democracy. They are the educators of the public in the democratic way of life. They role model *freedom* as they *freely give* their time, talent and treasure for the betterment of our participatory society.

Volunteers are the citizens who speak and act on behalf of justice and reform. They are the catalysts for cultural refinement and the agents of social change. They contribute countless hours, lend their expertise and give money to worthy causes and dire needs. As in Deuteronomy 15:11, they "open wide *their* hand to *their* brother, to the needy and to the poor in the land." They are the people who care and share for the benefit of others, themselves and ultimately our emancipated world. They are the foundation stones of our democratic freedom.

Conversely, the absence of volunteers—the lack of opportunity for free participation and opinion, is characteristic of a dictatorship. Therefore, it is incum-

bent upon us as a society to cherish and nourish these valuable volunteers. We are responsible to maintain and foster the legacy of *free world* volunteerism that they have given and continue to give to us.

How can we foster this legacy of volunteerism? One way is by believing in and promoting its underlying philosophy. It's almost instinctive to agree with altruism, believe in benevolence or concur that giving is a blessed thing, however, it's quite another thing to take *action* concerning these philosophical virtues and help to ensure that volunteerism and hence volunteers will be cherished and nourished.

I believe that one way to ensure *the volunteer legacy* is to endorse the proper management of volunteers. I believe volunteers are valuable components of the labour force who deserve selection and working guidelines, education, supervision and recognition. Volunteers are *unpaid* (referring only to "monetary remuneration") workers who merit the considera-

tion imparted to *paid* employees.

Who is responsible for the proper management of volunteers? Ultimately, every one of us. Recognition of the needs and rights of the volunteer is rooted in the needs and rights of the individual. Volunteers are first of all *persons* who need other persons to accept, appreciate, understand, listen to and love them. However the proper management of volunteers on the day-to-day scene is the responsibility of colleague volunteers and the person(s) to whom the volunteer is accountable—whether a salaried or unsalaried individual.

Proper management includes respecting and responding to both the rights and responsibilities of volunteers. These parallel the rights and responsibilities of paid personnel. They also encompass pendulum-type components that apply to both volunteers and management. Some of these are: appreciation, benefits, commitment, defined roles, education, ethics, guidance, participation, protection and recognition. The balancing and day-to-day appropriation of these components is the challenge of volunteer management.

It is a challenge that continues to energize me. This fall I will commence my twentieth year as a volunteer manager. My vision for the future of the volunteer program in University Hospital's expanding health care complex is galvanized by the philosophy of volunteerism declared in this paper. My personal goals as a *church, community and Canadian* volunteer align with this philosophy. Perhaps this is the bottom line—*one has to believe in volunteerism and be a volunteer to fully appreciate the privilege and philosophy of volunteer management.*

**CHAPTER 5: AVA'S ETHICS AND STANDARDS****PROFESSIONAL ETHICS****IN****VOLUNTEER SERVICES****ADMINISTRATION**

Adopted at the 1975 Annual Meeting of the Association for Volunteer Administration.

Prepared by the 1973-75 Committee on Ethics and Standards:

Carol Griffith Moore, Chair

**AVA Committee:**

Isabel Besecker  
Randy Burnip  
Phyllis Burnip

Anne Dunn  
Leonard Nemeth  
John Sealey

**AVA Consultants:**

Marvin Arffa  
Magdalen Fuller  
Marion Jeffery  
Mildred Katz  
Miriam Karlins  
Constance Krell

Charna Lewis  
Marjorie McAtee  
Harriet Naylor  
Marjorie Parker  
Ivan Scheier  
Marlene Wilson

**Additional Consultants:**

Paul Deats, Professor of Social Ethics, Boston University  
Wm. Clifton Moore, Professor, School of Theology, Boston University

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Association for Volunteer Administration  
P.O. Box 4584  
Boulder, CO 80306  
(303) 497-0238

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**PROFESSIONAL ETHICS IN  
VOLUNTEER SERVICES  
ADMINISTRATION**

Volunteer services administration exists to provide the leadership, structures and functions which facilitate the mobilization of human and other resources—

- to enable the meeting of human needs;
- to create a social climate which makes the meeting of human needs possible;
- to provide for the involvement of persons in the decision-making processes which affect them in social, economic, political, health and other realms;
- to contribute to creative and responsible social development and change;
- to enhance and extend the work of professional and other employed persons in certain service fields.

Volunteer services administration is based on (1) a commitment to social responsibility, (2) the need of every human being to express concern for other persons, and (3) the right to human dignity and self-determination. Along with the right of a person to volunteer as a means of self-actualization, there is the right of the recipient of services to accept and to define the circumstances of that help, or the right to reject help altogether. These rights are to be seen in the light of social responsibility. Thus, in any given situation considered from an ethical perspective these three dimensions are held in tension. No one of them is absolute.

Out of such considerations, guidelines for ethical principles in the practice of volunteer administration can be drawn. The members of the Association for Volunteer Administration pledge themselves to the following principles and guidelines:

**PRINCIPLE 1, PHILOSOPHY OF VOLUNTEERISM,** The Volunteer Services Administrator accepts the ethical responsibility to develop a personal coherent philosophy of volunteerism as a foundation for working with others in developing a volunteer program.

This means that the Administrator will:

1. have an understanding of the history, the goals, the ethical implications and the basic principles of volunteerism both philosophical and practical.
2. be in communication with colleagues who can contribute to the continuing growth of his/her own philosophy.
3. share that philosophy with immediate staff in the development of the volunteer program and of staff relationships.
4. develop a volunteer program which is consistent with the philosophy held and be able to interpret why volunteers should or should not be involved in certain roles.
5. interpret to the community, the staff, the recipients of the service, and the volunteers, the rationale for volunteerism.



**PRINCIPLE 2, HUMAN DIGNITY,** The Volunteer Services Administrator accepts the ethical responsibility to develop a volunteer program which will enhance the human dignity of all persons related to it.

This means that the Administrator will:

1. develop a volunteer program which respects the right of the recipient to privacy and promotes self-determination and self-help.
2. promote the welfare and interests of the recipients, the organization members, the volunteers and the agency or organization and its staff.
3. encourage an atmosphere in which innovation and creativity are valued.
4. examine with care any proposed research to insure that the integrity of individuals is not violated.
5. accept in the name of the agency or organization only those donations of materials, time, money and skills which are consistent with the goals of the agency, using them appropriately and in accordance with the intent of the donor.
6. provide volunteers with opportunities for training, personal growth and advancement which is not in conflict with employed staff roles.
7. provide supervision for volunteers in such a way as to respect their personal integrity and to build on their strengths, offer advice or assistance where indicated.
8. establish an agreement with volunteers which includes a commitment to the goals and policies of the agency or organization and interprets honestly and realistically the expectations of both volunteers and agency.
9. take all proper precautions for the welfare of volunteers including informing them of possible physical or emotional jeopardy.
10. provide a support system for volunteers which will insure meaningful and appropriate work assignments at which they can succeed and which will also insure responsible assignment, promotion or termination when appropriate.
11. provide written statements of policies and procedures to insure that all persons are treated fairly in their relationship to the agency organization.
12. provide volunteers with appropriate and sufficient information to carry out their responsibilities, keeping them informed of new approaches and policies.

**PRINCIPLE 3, MUTUALITY,** The Volunteer Services Administrator accepts the ethical responsibility to promote the understanding and actualization of inherent mutual benefits for all parties involved in any act of volunteer service.

This means that the Administrator will:

1. develop volunteer placements which will provide opportunities for mutual benefit.
2. help volunteers and recipients be conscious of the mutuality of their common experience.
3. encourage volunteer/recipient relationships which recognize the valuable contribution of each to the other.
4. assist the volunteer in defining his/her goals for volunteering and in understanding how the recipient contributes to the achievement of those goals.
5. assist all staff and other persons related to the volunteer program in recognizing that the mutuality involved enhances the dignity of each participant.

**PRINCIPLE 4, SELF-DETERMINATION,** The Volunteer Services Administrator accepts the ethical responsibility to promote the involvement of persons in decision-making processes which affect them directly.

This means that the Administrator will:

1. involve recipients of the volunteer service in the determination of what that service will be, and guidelines for its operation, as well as the evaluation of its accomplishments.
2. provide opportunities for volunteers to express their recommendations, concerns and questions to the agency or organization and provide for the continuing involvement of some volunteers in the policy making and planning affecting volunteers.
3. provide opportunities for employed staff affected by the involvement of volunteers to contribute to related decision-making processes.
4. establish channels for the wisdom growing out of the experience of the community to be incorporated into the planning and decision-making processes of the employing agency or organization.

**PRINCIPLE 5, PRIVACY,** The Volunteer Services Administrator accepts the ethical responsibility to respect the privacy of individuals and safeguard information received as confidential.

This means that the Administrator will:

1. make it clear to those who give information what kind of information cannot be kept confidential.
2. keep records which are accurate, contain only necessary information, and respect the privacy of individuals.

3. provide appropriate and accurate information from records when is it requested by the proper persons and protect records and information from unauthorized persons.
4. make certain of the anonymity of any anecdotes, case histories or illustrations used in speeches or in print.
5. not discuss work-related individuals or their problems in casual conversation.

**PRINCIPLE 6, STAFF RELATIONSHIPS,** The Volunteer Services Administrator accepts the ethical responsibility to develop a volunteer program which will enhance and extend the work of all professional and other employed persons.

This means that the Administrator will:

1. play a positive role in a staff support system, keeping in mind the interests of the volunteers, the recipients of the services and the agency or organization.
2. develop responsible and effective roles for administrative and service volunteers while promoting an understanding of and respect for distinctive roles of all employed staff.
3. develop advancement for volunteers which is not in conflict with staff roles nor will displace paid personnel.
4. interpret to employed staff through appropriate staff training and consultation the value of volunteerism and their responsibility to volunteers.
5. provide staff members not so closely related to the broader community with a fair interpretation of the community perspective on the concerns of the agency or organization.

**PRINCIPLE 7, SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY,** The Volunteer Services Administrator accepts the ethical responsibility to help create a social climate through which human needs can be met and human values enhanced.

This means that the Administrator will:

1. develop an understanding of the mores of the community and treat them with respect while not removing them from the arena of criticism and change.
2. demonstrate sensitivity to the influence of the employing agency or organization upon the social conditions of the community.
3. understand the role of volunteerism in relation to social conditions in the community.
4. be aware of the relationship of the volunteer program to the social issues in the community.

5. contribute to creative and responsible social development and change.

**PRINCIPLE 8, PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY,** The Volunteer Services Administrator accepts the ethical responsibility to contribute to the credibility of the profession in the eyes of those it serves.

This means that the Administrator will:

1. maintain high standards of professional competence.
2. act with integrity and objectivity in the professional role.
3. work for implementation of ethical practices in all types of volunteerism in the community.
4. refrain from any action which takes advantage of information or situations arising from professional contacts.
5. make a clear distinction between statements and actions which are personal and those which are representative of the employing agency or organization, the volunteers, or the professional organization.
6. accept employment in an agency or organization only when it is possible, with integrity, to align himself/herself with its policies and goals.
7. work within the accepted structure and procedures of the employing agency or organization or work in open and constructive ways to bring about change.
8. assure the validity of information used in publications, news releases or other information devices before becoming responsible for its release.
9. accept responsibility for providing professional consultation consistent with his/her own personal integrity and will request and accept consultation when it is needed.
10. carry on continuous and realistic evaluation of all programs for which he/she is responsible, such evaluation involving recipients of the service, volunteers, staff, agency or organization administrators and representatives of the community.
11. work diligently to enhance his/her own professional growth.
12. contribute to the expanding body of knowledge about volunteerism.
13. assume a fair share of responsibility for the effective functioning and development of the professional organization of which he/she is a member.



# ASSOCIATION FOR VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

## WHAT IS AVA?

The Association for Volunteer Administration, AVA, is the international, multi-discipline membership organization of professionals in the field of volunteerism and volunteer administration.

Our mission is to shape the future of volunteerism locally, nationally, and internationally by promoting and strengthening the profession of volunteer management.

AVA members share a vision of effective volunteer involvement and a commitment to developing their professional skills.

## WHAT IS AVA CERTIFICATION?

AVA sponsors the only professional certification program in the field of volunteer management. The designation, Certified in Volunteer Administration, is awarded to applicants who meet AVA professional standards and certification criteria.

The CVA certification program is unique. It combines self-assessment and the development of a portfolio to demonstrate competence in areas essential to successful volunteer administration.

## THE VALUE OF AVA CERTIFICATION

A career focus in volunteer administration or volunteer services management resulting in the CVA credential increases professional credibility, expands knowledge, and enhances recognition of leadership potential.

The certification process allows an individual to examine in-depth, career experiences and skills, and assists in formulating a career development plan.

The process also is an opportunity to study the various philosophical and historical origins of volunteerism and the influences of current issues and trends in the field.

Each individual who is certified promotes a wider recognition and respect for the high level of professionalism in volunteer administration.

## CERTIFICATION FEES

	AVA MEMBER	AFFILIATE MEMBER	NON-MEMBER
CERTIFICATION PACKET	\$ 25	\$ 25	\$ 25
CERTIFICATION WORKSHOP	35	35	35
SELF-INITIATING PACKET	20	25	35
APPLICATION FEE	100	190	290
PORTFOLIO SUBMISSION FEE	50	50	50
PORTFOLIO RESUBMISSION FEE	30	45	60
PAYABLE IN U.S. FUNDS ONLY		AVA ANNUAL DUES ARE \$ 75	

## THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

AVA's performance based certification program is open to experienced professionals, salaried and non-salaried, in volunteer administration.

Each candidate must have a minimum of two years of administrative experience in volunteer management.

Portfolio development is the essential element in the program. Through a process of self-assessment and portfolio development, each applicant moves at his/her individual pace towards completion of the program. An independent Assessment Review Panel composed of practitioners, educators, trainers and certified volunteer administrators reviews the application and portfolio, assesses qualifications according to AVA performance criteria, and awards the CVA credential upon successful completion of the program.

There is a three year period in which to complete the process after acceptance into the program. To assist applicants, workshops are offered in the United States and Canada. These half-day training sessions are sponsored by AVA Regions, Affiliates, State Conferences, local organizations and interested individuals.

For information on the workshop schedule or for more information on sponsoring a certification workshop contact AVA.

### OVERVIEW OF STEPS IN THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

**STEP 1:** Order a Certification Packet from AVA.  
The Certification Packet contains a full-description of the certification process and all materials required to complete the self-assessment, application and portfolio.

**STEP 2:** **OPTION A:** Attend a Certification Workshop  
**OPTION B:** Order the Self-Initiating Candidate Packet

#### OPTION A. Attend a Certification Workshop

While not mandatory, attendance at a Certification Workshop is strongly recommended. Workshops are scheduled at various locations throughout the year and at the National Conference on Volunteerism sponsored by AVA each October. Contact the AVA office for additional information.

Workshop Fee: \$35 in US Funds.

#### OPTION B. Self-Initiating Candidate

If all the requirements for the process as outlined in the Certification Packet are met and an applicant can not attend a Certification Workshop, an individual may work independently. If a workshop is attended at a later date, the full fee will be required.

The Self-Initiating Candidate Packet may be ordered from AVA. This packet contains information to assist candidates in the process.

Materials Fee:	AVA Member:	\$20 in US Funds
	Affiliate Member:	\$25 in US Funds
	Non-Member:	\$35 in US Funds

Step 3: Make Formal Application

The following materials must accompany the application form:

- The Self-Assessment Score Sheet
- The Self-Assessment Summary Sheet
- A Performance Narrative, case study, of 1000 words
- A 200 word Statement of Philosophy
- The Application Fee

Application fee:

AVA Member	\$100 in US Funds
Affiliate Member	190 in US Funds
Non-Member	290 in US Funds

An applicant will be notified when his/her application has been accepted by the Application Review Panel.

If an application is not accepted by the Application Review Panel, the application fee, less \$15 for handling costs, will be refunded. Reasons for non-acceptance will be detailed in a letter and the procedure for resubmission will be outlined. The full application fee must accompany a resubmission application.

Step 4. Submit the Portfolio

Candidates for Certification have three years after the acceptance of their application in which to complete the program. Many candidates complete the process in a much shorter time.

The Portfolio will include:

- Title Page
- Table of Contents
- Autobiographical Outline
- Philosophy of Volunteerism-1000 words, expanded from the 200 word philosophy submitted with the application
- Two Management Performance Narratives-each narrative not to exceed 1000 words
- A Behavioral Performance Narrative not to exceed 1000 words
- Three Grounding in the Profession Narratives not to exceed 500 words each
- Career Development Plan

Portfolio Submission Fee. \$50 in US Funds

The Certification Assessment Review Panel will notify candidates of the result of the review. Candidates who successfully complete the portfolio process will be notified in writing and will be given the right to use the designation CVA after their names. A certificate will be forwarded and, if requested, a letter will be sent to an employer.

If materials do not meet the required standards, candidates will be notified and the reasons for the decision will be outlined. A candidate may be requested to rewrite narratives that do not clearly demonstrate performance.

Portfolio Resubmission Fee:	Ava Member:	\$30 in US Funds
	Affiliate Member:	\$45 in US Funds
	Non-Member	\$60 in US Funds

It is understood that completion of the Portfolio Process and full payment of fees does not guarantee certification. It is agreed that neither AVA, its officers, members, nor other persons involved in the Certification Process shall be held liable for the failure of any applicant to achieve certification. Participation in the AVA Performance Based Certification Program does not guarantee that the applicant will be certified.

The above information is a summary of the pertinent steps of the Certification Process. Complete details of the program are available in the Certification Packet. This overview is provided to demonstrate the exciting opportunities professional certification makes possible.

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<i>PRESIDENT:</i>	CHRISTINE G. FRANKLIN
<i>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CHAIR:</i>	WINIFRED L. BROWN
<i>APPLICATION REVIEW PANEL CHAIR:</i>	JOHN D. MASON, CVA
<i>ASSESSMENT REVIEW PANEL CHAIR:</i>	MEL DEL MONTE, CVA
<i>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:</i>	JACQUELINE A. CALLAHAN

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ASSOCIATION FOR VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION  
P.O. Box 4584  
Boulder, Colorado 80306  
(303)497-0238