

**The State Office
of
Volunteerism Manual**



February 1989

The materials contained herein were prepared by Michael I. Schwartz through a grant award to the New Jersey Office of Volunteerism. Funds to conduct the research and development activities and publication of this manual were provided by ACTION, The Federal Domestic Volunteer Agency.

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I do not know where you are going or what you will do in life, but I do know this: you will never fulfill your potential or really be happy as human persons until you learn how to serve others, especially in their human needs

Dr. Albert Schweitzer



THOMAS H. KEAN
GOVERNOR

In our American democracy, which thrives on the participation of its members, volunteerism is the active fulfillment of citizenship. Volunteerism is American -- our communities depend upon volunteers to amplify government services and to reach where government does not.

Government cannot provide all of the services needed or solve all of the problems in our communities, but it can play the role of a partner in creating the opportunity for people to help themselves and others. While citizens, businesses, and community organizations contribute service and monetary donations to the partnership, government provides networking, coordination, and leadership to assist volunteer programs.

We in New Jersey's state government have committed our resources to strengthening the public-private partnership through an office dedicated to that sole purpose. In 1985, I established the New Jersey Office of Volunteerism with the mission of supporting the growth and development of volunteerism throughout the state. The Office promotes public-private partnerships to help both sectors as they serve the community. After three years, it has become the focal point of a progressive volunteer force in New Jersey.

I am pleased that ACTION, The Federal Domestic Volunteer Agency awarded the State of New Jersey a Technical Assistance Project grant. The grant enabled the New Jersey Office of Volunteerism to work with ACTION in developing this manual to support the operation of existing state offices of volunteerism, and to assist states that plan to establish such an office. Considering the success of the New Jersey Office of Volunteerism, I recommend that a state office of volunteerism be established permanently in all states.

Tom Kean



OFFICE OF
THE DIRECTOR

ACTION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20525

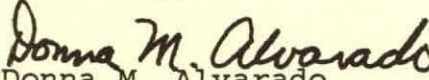
Dear Readers,

ACTION, the Federal Domestic Volunteer Agency, has a proud history as an initiator of State Offices of Volunteerism. Since a 1974 partnership with the National Governor's Association to establish statewide coordinators of volunteerism, ACTION has supported the development of statewide initiatives in almost every state through both financial and technical assistance. As a result of this federal/state partnership, the dedicated leadership of the Nation's Governors, and volunteer leaders within each state, there is a growing national network of State Offices which provide vital support and assistance to the myriad local volunteer organizations in America's communities.

As the Nation proceeds into the 21st Century, the application of human resources is recognized as a key element in meeting the challenges which face our communities. State Offices of Volunteerism are making a major contribution by enabling local citizens to reach out on a personal level to assist their less fortunate neighbors to fully participate in and benefit from the American dream. As the numbers of volunteers increase, we shall surely become the "kinder, gentler America" of which President George Bush speaks, a Nation to which much has been given and of whose citizens much is expected.

Finally, I would like to express gratitude to the Honorable Thomas Kean, Governor of New Jersey, and his able staff for their outstanding contribution in preparing this manual.

Sincerely,


Donna M. Alvarado
Director

FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM • YOUNG VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION • SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM
RETIRED SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM • OFFICE OF VOLUNTARISM INITIATIVES • VOLUNTEER DRUG USE PREVENTION PROGRAM
VISTA • NATIONAL CENTER FOR SERVICE LEARNING



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THOMAS H. KEAN
GOVERNOR

KELLY A. LAW
DIRECTOR

January 31, 1989

Dear Reader:

Current trends indicate that local and state governments will continue to assume greater responsibility for meeting human services needs. At a time when modification in federal funding is taking place and demographic changes are occurring throughout the nation, it is imperative that these governmental bodies seek innovative means by which services can be provided.

There is one prominent resource in the United States that remains largely untapped -- the American people. According to the most recent Independent Sector study, "an estimated 80 million Americans volunteered an average of 4.7 hours per week in 1987. They gave a total of 19.5 billion hours. This total included 14.9 billion hours of formal volunteering... [which] represented an equivalent of 8.8 million employees at an estimated value time of \$150 billion." Local and state governments must recognize the volunteer sector in respect to its pervasiveness and value. They must support existing community service efforts and address the segment of the citizenry who could contribute as volunteers and through charitable giving.

More than thirty states have established State Offices of Volunteerism which afford local and state governments the opportunity to become involved with the volunteer sector that strives to improve our communities, our nation, our world. Each State Office of Volunteerism serves as a cost-effective facilitator and catalyst in supporting the growth and development of volunteerism throughout the state. The Office links the public, private, and non-profit sectors so that they all may work together to fulfill contemporary needs and design for the future.

On the following pages is a description of the establishment, structure, and maintenance of the State Office of Volunteerism based on similar Offices across the country. It is my hope that this manual will assist in the establishment of permanent State Offices of Volunteerism in all states within the next few years. I encourage members of the public, private, and non-profit sectors to continue to find new means to form and support partnerships such as the State Office of Volunteerism.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael I. Schwartz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Michael I. Schwartz
Writer/Editor

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank all who have contributed to the development of this manual. The writer acknowledges the cooperation and assistance provided him by those who reviewed the draft copy; others who consulted at national meetings; and those who shared information during on-site visits:

Ms. Jeanne Bradner, Director, Governor's Office of Voluntary Action

Ms. Christa Ellis, Coordinator, Georgia Office of Volunteer Services

Ms. Laura Lee Geraghty, Director, Minnesota Office of Volunteer Services

Ms. Joyce St. John-Marcus, Executive Assistant, Alabama Office of Volunteerism

Ms. Billie Ann Meyers, Director, Arkansas Office of Volunteerism

Ms. Peggy Jo Mihata, Coordinator, Washington State Center for Voluntary Action

Ms. Katherine H. Noyes, Director of Program Services, Virginia Department of Volunteerism

Ms. Nancy F. Olsen, Director, Delaware Division of Volunteer Services

The writer is especially grateful to:

Ms. Kelly A. Law, Director, New Jersey Office of Volunteerism

Ms. Debi Gonzalez, Administrative Assistant, New Jersey Office of Volunteerism

Mr. Joseph Bass, Technical Assistance Officer, Program Demonstration and Development
Division, ACTION

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INTRODUCTION

The State Office of Volunteerism (SOV)* occupies a particularly important position in our government. No state agency, other than the SOV, fulfills the role of a statewide focal point which serves as the liaison among public and private local, state, and national volunteer programs. The mission of the SOV is to promote, coordinate, and enhance citizen participation by creating, developing, or supporting public, private, and nonprofit volunteer programs on a statewide basis. Many states already have established SOVs in their governments; a few states are currently in the process of creating an SOV; while several states are yet uncommitted.

In these times, economic, social, and governmental changes necessitate that state governments respond increasingly to the continued growth of human service needs. Volunteerism, since the first American settlements, has been an integral element in meeting these needs. Today, state governments, via a Governor's Office or legislative initiative, have the opportunity to address these needs by supporting volunteer efforts through a State Office of Volunteerism.

As a result of the research conducted for this project, this manual will discuss: the history and the need for SOVs; the creation of an SOV; the maintenance and organization of an SOV; the functions, duties, and services of an SOV; and strategies for survival.

**Each "State Office of Volunteerism" is unique in its makeup, the activities it performs, and even its name. However, enough similarities exist to permit the use of a generic model to represent SOVs nationwide. When necessary, individual states will be used to highlight specific points. [See Appendices A-C for a mailing list and profiles of SOVs nationwide.]*

PERSPECTIVE: VOLUNTEERISM IN THE UNITED STATES

Volunteerism is an old tree living in the American soil. Since the first settlements in the New World, the spirit of community service has been reasserted through each subsequent generation. We must not forget that the people who founded our nation left homes in other countries, carrying their convictions with them, to build on a new land — together. The act of helping each other was the vehicle used to ensure the survival and growth of the community.

If the harsh environment and the opportunities offered by a new land served as the catalyst for the development of volunteerism and community participation, then by the nineteenth century it had reached a noteworthy stage. Alexis De Tocqueville, the French statesman and political philosopher, observed in his book, *Democracy in America*, published in 1835, that during his visit to the United States he noticed the peculiar custom of individuals forming associations to provide services and solve problems. De Tocqueville could not find a precedent for this unusual American civic activity in England, nor any other country. He concluded,

Thus, the most democratic country on the face of the earth is that in which men have, in our time, carried to the highest perfection the art of pursuing in common the object of their common desires and have applied this new science to the greatest number of purposes. Is this the result of accident, or is there in reality any necessary connection between the principle of association and that of equality?¹

We must not forget our nation's history and the values from which it emerged.

One historian has said that "The U.S. is the only country in the world where giving and volunteering are such pervasive characteristics of the total society."² Today, this comment can be demonstrated through assessments of volunteerism nationwide. According to the findings of the 1988 edition of the INDEPENDENT SECTOR study, *Giving and Volunteering in the United States*:

Seventy-one percent of the respondents reported that their households contributed to charity. These contributions averaged \$790, or 1.9 percent of the household income. Based on this finding, it is estimated that approximately 65 million households contributed to charity in 1987.

*

The average contribution for all households in 1987, including non-contributors, was \$562, or 1.5 percent of income. There were 91 million households in the United States.

*

An estimated 80 million Americans (45.3 percent of adults 18 years of age or older) volunteered an average of 4.7 hours per week in 1987. They gave a total of 19.5 billion hours. This total included 14.9 billion hours of formal volunteering (involving specific time commitments to organizations) and 4.7 billion hours of informal volunteering (helping neighbors or providing assistance on an ad hoc basis to organizations). The 14.9 billion hours of formal volunteering represented an equivalent of 8.8 million employees at an estimated value time of \$150 billion.³

The data gathered in INDEPENDENT SECTOR's 1988 study depict clearly the result of the development of volunteerism from the very founding of our nation to the present. One might ask, "If volunteerism is such a prominent activity in the United States, why then should government become more involved?" Another may answer, "The gap, between the amount of services provided, and the actual amount of services needed (not including predicted continued growth) could be decreased."

Volunteerism is one means by which the government can increase services at comparatively little cost. Governments have limited funds. This is especially true today considering that our federal government is operating under an extensive budget deficit. Governments must develop and apply new approaches in order to provide necessary services to citizens. Proportionately minimal funds allocated to volunteer programs can enhance a vast amount of services. This type of approach to increase community services is extraordinarily cost-effective. In 1987, nearly half of the American population 14 years or older volunteered an average of 4.7 hours per week and the average contribution for all households was \$562, or 1.5 percent of income. The INDEPENDENT SECTOR study revealed additional intriguing findings.

There is an enormous capacity to increase giving and volunteering in the United States.

- (1) Of the three-fourths of the respondents who believed that they should volunteer to help others, 50 percent did not volunteer in the past year.
- (2) It appears that many Americans are not being asked to volunteer. Three-fourths of the respondents reported that they had not refused to volunteer when asked, yet only 45 percent reported volunteering.⁴

The goal is to increase the amount of hours being volunteered, increase the amount of charitable giving, and include more of the other half of the American population that is not involved in the volunteer spirit.

HISTORY OF THE SOV PROGRAM

In the early 1970's many public officials were interested in volunteerism. Theoreticians and practitioners in government have always known that governments cannot meet all of the needs of the citizens it serves. So it was not a new problem that, while the American governmental system had grown to an immense size by the early 1970's and provided more services than ever before, it still was unable to meet all of the needs of the American population. Many citizens and their public officials believed that a variety of services still had to be provided. If the government could not, or perhaps should not, provide these services then another solution had to be found. The concept of citizen-government partnership was generated. Although not a new idea, the focus was upon volunteerism. The premise of the citizen-government partnership has expanded today to include the private and non-profit sectors. Such a partnership maintains that citizens and organizations should volunteer time and service and contribute money to amplify services in their communities.

We really can no longer think of the world of human services as sharply divided between "public and private" . . . they are intertwined. An SOV is the only place I know of where both public and private agencies can turn for help with their volunteer programs and share techniques, problems and solutions. Out of this can emerge understanding and true partnerships.

*Jeanne Bradner
Director
Illinois Governor's Office of Voluntary Action*

ACTION, The Federal Domestic Volunteer Agency, promoted the idea of citizen-government partnership by initiating the SOV Program [originally named, The State Volunteer Services Coordinator Program (Statewide)]. The background of this Program was cited in ACTION's 1977 *State Office of Volunteerism Program — A Study Paper*.

The State Office of Volunteerism Program was established in March 1974 as an ACTION demonstration grant program to promote volunteerism at the state level. It is a program in which the national government encourages the voluntary movement in America, supporting its independence and promoting self-reliance.

Designed in cooperation with the 1973 National Governors' Conference, the Program was fashioned after offices of volunteerism already established by a few governors in their respective states. Using these existing programs as prototypes, the Program provided for an office of volunteer coordination to be located within the executive branch of state governments. These offices were intended to offer various types of support for the extensive network of government and private voluntary organizations within the states. They were intended to encourage and coordinate existing voluntary programs within state government departments and to assist with design and development of additional voluntary offices and programs. Local, private voluntary organizations within the states were to be assisted and supported, as were the programs of ACTION and other national voluntary organizations.⁵

Originally, the purpose of the SOV Program, according to ACTION's 1976 Guidelines, was to address the areas of human, social, and environmental needs with particular attention to poverty problems. In ACTION's 1976 publication, *The Statewide Program — Program Evaluation Final Report*, it was realized that the "ACTION Guidelines for the Statewide Program were very general and broad in their statements of objectives. While indicating that a variety of activities or functions must be performed, the program objectives as a whole allowed a great deal of operational flexibility."⁶ For example, the SOV is available to function as an instrument to mobilize volunteer organizations during a crisis. The element of flexibility afforded grant recipients a great advantage. Each state could design the SOV to meet its unique needs and priorities.

While the ACTION guidelines are, indeed, flexible, I find it interesting to note the similarities among SOVs: newsletters, statewide conferences, technical assistance, networking, legislative advocacy, and workshops seem to be needed for the volunteer organizations and their leadership in every state.

*Jeanne Bradner
Director
Illinois Governor's Office of Voluntary Action*

Section II.

**THE CREATION
OF THE SOV**

INTRODUCTION

The creation of the SOV is an undertaking that entails several components. Many people who have experienced the creation process have described the uncertainties and difficulties that underlie this process. The person, or group of people, who identify the need for, and are willing to devote the necessary work and time in order to establish an SOV, must not underestimate the value of preparation for such a task. The failure to plan and secure the proper support, network, funds, and location will probably result in the failure of that Office and will taint the image of the SOV for future attempts in that state.

RESEARCH AND PLANNING

Introduction

Research and planning are essential elements in the process of creating an SOV. This aspect of founding the Office includes the investigation of all areas (introduced in this manual) pertinent to the SOV. The time most favorable for such studies is before the formal establishment of the operational Office. An advisory committee or a special task force can conduct the necessary investigations. The findings are used to structure programmatic goals. Budgets, time, and personnel for the research and planning of an SOV will vary in each state. The sections that follow are meant to serve as a guideline for such a study. It is suggested that states considering the establishment of an SOV consult similar research and planning projects conducted by other states. [See Recommended Readings]

Why

Why is research and planning necessary for the establishment of the SOV? Because each state, and the volunteer community within that state, has specific needs in comparison to another state. Proper research and planning enable the efficient establishment of a well-thought-out mission, inhibit duplication of services, appropriately position the SOV, and evoke support from the volunteer community. The SOV should reflect the uniqueness of the state. Research is the means to discover the uniqueness, planning is the means to address it. Further, research and

planning should be ongoing activities if the SOV is to evolve along with the volunteer community based upon the needs of the state.

When

When to conduct the research and planning is a matter dependent upon many factors within the particular state. Preferably, they will be initiated before the SOV, that is, prior to the actual hiring of staff and the physical establishment of the Office. The amount of time needed before the establishment of the SOV depends upon the time necessary to complete a thorough investigation about matters pertinent to the Office and its ability to develop support from the volunteer community. Citizen advisory committees may conduct statewide town meetings to obtain input on the establishment of an SOV. The information should be compiled and submitted at least six months prior to the establishment of an Office. Unfortunately, research and planning are not always possible before the establishment of the SOV. For example, lack of personnel and funds can deter the planning and research prior to the establishment of the Office. Conversely, the planning and research phase may need to be postponed if funds and personnel suddenly become available and it is necessary to expedite the establishment of the Office. If the latter is the case, the research and planning should be attended to as the priority during the early months of the Office. It is preferable that research and planning be carried out in order to avoid many possible problems.

Who & Where

A person or group interested in establishing an SOV must decide who will be responsible for research and planning and where it will take place. Determination of the size of the group to conduct the study and the amount of time allocated for it depends upon the nature of the research and planning. Decisions that must be made about the study are another factor supporting the idea of forming an advisory committee prior to the establishment of the Office. Another option is for an advisory committee to conduct the research and planning or at least assist in the planning phase. The staff of an SOV is usually few in number. If the research is conducted by the staff while they attempt to meet programmatic needs, a burden could be produced. The most suitable group to conduct research is a task force, while the advisory committee would manage the planning. Both groups could work together for best results.

The legislature, or the research office thereof, should be included in any research effort. Their involvement could be authorized by a legislator interested in establishing the Office. Later, necessary legislative support is then more likely. End result should be inclusion in the Code for the State for permanency.

*Nancy Olsen
Director
Delaware Division of Volunteer Services*

What

The contents of the research and planning effort consist of all the information specific to the state in which the SOV is to be established. This information can also be used for the continued maintenance of the Office. The research should address the following points:

1. *Analysis of the extent and characteristics of volunteerism in the state.* This includes an inquiry about the means by which the state government coordinates volunteer efforts. If the state has no such means, the research should examine the structure of the state government with respect to the possibility of creating an SOV. If there is consideration of the placement of the SOV outside of state government, this area too must be carefully analyzed. (All SOV directors and ACTION officials interviewed believe that such action would hinder the effectiveness of the Office.)

2. *Determination of the need for the SOV.* This might seem unnecessary, but the findings serve a dual purpose: to assess the services already being provided by volunteer agencies throughout the state, and to evoke specific findings that will document the need for the Office. Examination of the volunteer community identifies the services it provides as well as the services it needs.

The interpretation and application of these findings will define the SOV niche. Another use of the findings is as a source of facts and information attesting to the need and benefits of a SOV. The SOV can use and update these findings frequently as a marketing tool and document them in its publications.

3. *Collection of information available from the many established SOVs and national volunteer agencies.* Each established SOV is unique and so can offer variations and possibilities for the new SOV. Materials such as annual reports, brochures, samples of legislation, and newsletters are valuable resources that provide extensive information. Further information

concerning SOVs nationwide can be gathered from the National Assembly of State Offices of Volunteerism. Information from national volunteer agencies such as VOLUNTEER, AVA, and ACTION should also be included in this research. Of these agencies, ACTION, the initiator of The State Office of Volunteerism Program, is particularly important. Materials [See Recommended Readings] from ACTION should be reviewed. SOVs, national agencies, and other organizations house volunteer literature that can augment other research resources. If specific programs such as volunteerism in education or volunteerism in state government are planned, then the research needs to reflect such specifications. Each study should be designed according to the needs of that state.

How

The question of how the research is to be conducted is a matter related to the type of research. Interviews, written documents, on-site visits, and surveys are a few possible devices for gathering data. Interviews with SOV staff members in other states can augment the research content. The information they can share is invaluable. Interviews with former SOV staff who were involved in its creation can be beneficial. Their information can be quite helpful if they met with problems that resulted in the closing of the Office. In this case, former staff might be able to communicate information specific to the state and help the new Office avoid these problems. ACTION officials associated with the SOV Program are also key contacts and potential interviewees. On-site visits to SOVs throughout the country provide the opportunity to see an Office firsthand and could serve as the time to conduct interviews. Surveys are effective tools to gather data to evaluate volunteerism throughout a state. Several surveys have already been conducted specifically related to SOVs nationwide. The National Assembly of State Offices of Volunteerism also conducts an annual survey which may be obtained from the Arkansas Office of Volunteerism.

When the Illinois office was begun, four consultants each took one region of the state and interviewed government and private not-for-profit organizations about their programs and their needs for increasing effectiveness in involving volunteers. Then a statewide conference was held at which these regions reported and focus groups were formed to report back to the conference. This was not only a fine way to bring people together, but the results of that conference are still a reference point for our continuing goals and objectives.

*Jeanne Bradner
Director
Illinois Governor's Office of Voluntary Action*

An example of a research study that led to the creation of an SOV is worth noting. In 1977, the Governor's Council of Colorado, Voluntary Action Task Force, through the Colorado Office of Human Resources, conducted a study entitled *Determining The Need For A State Office Of Volunteerism*. The study was based on the results of a survey conducted with volunteers and volunteer managers of non-profit human service agencies throughout Colorado. It was the first of its type to have been completed prior to the establishment of a state office of volunteerism. The study addressed the advantages, disadvantages, concerns, structure, functions, and support of an SOV. The final conclusions drawn from the study assert that "The purpose of this survey was to determine if there was a need for or an interest in establishing a state office of volunteerism in Colorado. The results clearly show that the majority of the respondents (63%) supported the formation of the office." It is further stated that, "Clearly an overwhelming majority of respondents (88%) who believed the government should actively promote volunteerism contributed overall support for the establishment of the office."⁷

SUPPORT AND NETWORKING

Introduction

Important to the well-being of the SOV is the establishment of support and networking from local, state, and national organizations. As with research and planning, this part of the creation process is most beneficial if started before the formal establishment of the Office. Support, in the form of verbal testimony and written documentation from volunteer organizations, volunteers, and others interested in such an office can greatly assist the SOV's creation. Once the Office is established, this support will be in place for the new staff's use and will thereafter be a valuable asset on which to continually build its constituency at the local, state, and national levels.

Local

The primary support of the SOV is local public, private, and independent sector organizations, community leaders, and individual volunteers. These same are the primary target of the SOV and they are the Office's "natural" advocates. Communication between the SOV

and grass roots organizations and individuals is of great importance. Some local, or grass roots, organizations are:

1. VAC (Voluntary Action Center) — an agency that represents all volunteer agencies in a county, city, or area and acts as a resource, referral, and community outreach organization.
2. DOVIA (Directors Of Volunteers In Agencies) or DOVS (Directors Of Volunteer Services) or “Association . . .” or “Council . . .” or “Society . . .” — an association of individuals with an interest in leadership of volunteers or volunteer programs. The main activities of the DOVIA are to: network, problem solve, professionalize, and educate in the field of volunteerism in a particular geographic area.
3. RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program): part of ACTION, The Federal Domestic Volunteer Agency.
4. United Way, Red Cross, PTA, Junior League, hospitals, etc.

All of the above organizations have vast networks that can be tapped by the SOV. The SOV staff can expand its network by performing several activities. The staff has the opportunity to visit local offices, invite the leaders of these groups to visit the SOV, correspond through letters or newsletters (even before the Office is founded), and attend local group meetings. Several months “on the road” need to be devoted to on-site visits in order to establish vital ties. These efforts will produce multiple benefits for the Office. The goal of the Office is to reach all counties to ensure that the entire state’s volunteer community is represented.

The stronger and more complete the network, the more extensive and varied will be the support. When the SOV has earned credibility with these local groups, many services can be obtained. For example, these groups can help plan and participate in events, act as advisors, serve on steering committees, and provide mailing lists. Depending on the state, the services between the local groups and the SOV will vary, but the SOV *always* connects with the local volunteer effort. The SOV can help establish new local agencies such as DOVIAs or VACs which will strengthen the statewide volunteer community and thus augment the SOV’s local support network.

In summation, the Offices’s local constituents are the moving force behind the SOV. A healthy working relationship ultimately encourages and shapes volunteerism throughout the

entire state. The articulated experience of local groups is a valuable means by which the new SOV can assess the needs of the statewide volunteer community. Working in conjunction with the advisory committee, the local groups ultimately determine the mission of the SOV. In this way, the SOV can program accurately and economically. Without the support of the local volunteer network, the foundation of the SOV is faulty.

It is essential that the local volunteer community understand the role of an SOV. To be successful, an SOV MUST have local volunteer community support.

*Peggy Jo Mihata
Coordinator
Washington State Center for Voluntary Action*

State

Support and networking for the SOV must also encompass the state level. The network at the state level generally comprises the governor, legislature, state departments, statewide associations of local volunteer groups, statewide private corporations, and individual leaders who are recognized statewide.

The questions about the value of association and type of relationship that should exist between the SOV and the governor have no simple or absolute answers. Most SOVs have been created by a governor's executive order and placed within the executive office. ACTION clearly stated its objective to place the SOV in a position associated with the governor or at least at a high level in the state administration. ACTION's 1974 *Guidelines* cited that funds would be distributed according to the "Criteria for Grant Awards."

A. Preference will be given to those States which have permanently established a Volunteer Coordinator's function by either having a Governor's Executive Order establishing it, with drafted legislation proposed, or by having the necessary legislation enacted, or drafted and under consideration by the State legislature.

B. Proposals must indicate that the Governor has given written approval for establishment of a Volunteer Service Coordinating function within his own executive offices or that the *administrative placement of the proposed office of the Volunteer Coordinator is going to be able to cross State program functional lines.*

From the beginning, ACTION realized that the SOV's close association with the governor might have some disadvantages, but advantages such as credibility, political support, efficiency, and immediate establishment of the Office were thought vital for success.

Some disadvantages can coincide with the SOV's strong association with the governor. These disadvantages relate to the possibility of the Office becoming involved in partisan activities. An Office identified with a particular political party may lead to difficulties in relations with other state agencies, private organizations, and volunteer leaders who could view such an association unfavorably. During campaign time, the future of the politically-labeled Office will be uncertain. When the incumbent governor leaves office, the partisan-oriented Office might not survive the transition process. These situations must be anticipated during the planning phase so strategies can be developed to avoid potential problems.

Although the disadvantages of direct association with the governor are evident, many advantages can be afforded by such a relationship. When the SOV is created by executive order a rapid establishment of the Office is achieved. Initial and continued support of the SOV from the governor is important for success. In the 1977 *State Offices of Volunteerism Program: A Study Paper*, ACTION found that the SOV "staff can more easily concentrate on the performance of functions important to volunteerism, when the Office is identified with the statewide elected official with executive responsibility in state government. Coordination of certain functions of state government often resides with the Executive Office; these may include functions of planning, purchasing, budget, and general administration."⁸ The support of the governor also provides the SOV with an established constituency, and the availability of human and material resources. Most would agree that, at least in the first few years, the benefits of a close relationship with the governor outweigh the possible risks.

The SOV can extend its network and develop support through several other state level constituencies. Legislatures, state government departments and agencies, private statewide agencies and associations are a few state level constituencies. SOV directors also noted that statewide associations of local public organizations such as RSVP, United Way, and Red Cross are important contacts for support, networking, and technical assistance. In order to serve as the effective liaison for the local level organizations, the SOV must maintain communication with them. One way to ensure support is to include representatives from the state level organizations on advisory planning groups led by the SOV.

National

The support and networking of the SOV should extend to the national level and include those organizations and officials with an expressed interest in volunteerism and specifically in SOVs. The primary national affiliation of the SOV is with The National Assembly of State Offices of Volunteerism. As its name implies, the Assembly's purpose is to support the growth of volunteerism in the United States through SOVs. Membership of the Assembly is comprised of SOVs, each having one vote, represented by the director or his/her designee. The primary objectives of the Assembly are:

1. To develop information concerning SOVs and a system for exchanging that information among members of the Assembly and other organizations outside the Assembly.
2. To develop a mechanism for promoting the utilization of existing SOVs and for assisting in the creation of new SOVs.

Now that the National Assembly of State Offices of Volunteerism is established, states considering the creation of an SOV are provided with a valuable source for assistance. Further, via the Assembly, an SOV can develop relationships with appropriate national organizations such as: AVA (Association for Volunteer Administration); VOLUNTEER — The National Center; ACTION, The Federal Domestic Volunteer Agency; NGA (National Governors Association); Council of State Governments; and National Association of State Legislators.

Private Sector

The private sector plays an important role at all levels in the support and network system of an SOV. An SOV has the ability to assist in the creation, development, and support of private volunteer program initiatives. In turn, the private sector can lend the expertise of respected business leaders, provide in-kind services, and offer financial assistance. Such a relationship enhances exposure and credibility of an SOV. In this relationship, the SOV links the private sector with the public and non-profit sectors in providing community service.

Conclusion

Building positive and productive relationships with a broad range of constituents at all levels is vital for the successful SOV. Although generally few in number, the SOV staff can expand its network and develop strong support to increase its productivity. Open, frequent communication with an emphasis on collaboration, is essential for ensuring support for the SOV.

LOCATION

Introduction

The physical location of the SOV should be one that best facilitates and promotes the activities of the Office. Visibility, efficiency, and accessibility have been factors most important for this selection. Three different locales are usually considered as possibilities: within the governor's office, in a state department, or as an independent organization outside the realm of state government.

Governor's Office

The positioning of the SOV in the governor's office certainly fulfills the criteria of visibility, efficiency, and accessibility. In addition, what might seem insignificant services, such as the use of the governor's office stationery, accessibility to the governor, the use of the governor's office name, and accessibility to the press are actually strong benefits. Furthermore, when the time comes to mandate the Office, the status of the governor's office possibly will assist the process. However, the risks mentioned earlier should be considered.

State Government Department

The SOV positioned within a state government department, or, as in Virginia as a separate department, still is provided with many services and facilities, but it does not derive the added benefits of location in a governor's office. If the Office was placed at a high enough level within state government to allow for the ability to cross departmental boundaries, maintain the

governor's support and involvement, and ensure visibility; then this arrangement could be recommended.

Independent Location

An Office located independently or partially independent of the state government is also possible. This type of Office has been infrequent, and because of its comparative peculiarity, careful research and planning should be conducted before venturing this route. Many interviewees expressed their disfavor for such a location. This type of Office will most likely forfeit the benefits that an SOV in state government would receive. More important are the questions about budgetary matters. If the independent Office is not completely funded by the state then private funds must be solicited. Several SOV directors and ACTION officials believed that the SOV should not compete for funds that volunteer organizations in the state need. (This point will be discussed further in the Funding section.) Supporting the Office with private funds is less predictable than with public dollars. Also, it is believed that the independent type SOV may tend toward exclusivity, serving only organizations that fund the Office. This situation may enhance the risk of failure. Thus, it is recommended that an SOV not be located independent of state government.

Conclusion

Research and planning should be conducted to determine which location is most beneficial for a particular state. The results of the research for this manual indicate that an advantage exists when an Office is part of state government. An SOV that is "of" the governor's office but located "in" a state government department, appears to be the best site. In this way, its status in the governor's office *and* a state department is maintained, and thus the advantages of both can be secured. The procedure to attain this model assumes that the SOV is first a part of the governor's office. Then the Office is mandated into a specific state department. The legislation for this mandate asserts that the Office maintains its association with the governor's office but receives funds from and follows the guidelines of the respective state department. The final decision for the location of the SOV should be based on which arrangement would best promote effectiveness and efficiency of the Office.

FUNDING

Introduction

Funding of the SOV has been an issue of complication and concern since the establishment of the first Offices. Many Offices have closed due solely to a lack of funds. The SOV Program has been marked by a period in our country's history when cutbacks in government spending are severe. The past record of the funding for SOVs, and the current environment, dominated by a national budget deficit and cutbacks, seem to suggest that funding will continue to be uncertain.

Primary funding sources for the SOV, to date, have been through ACTION, state governments, and private agencies. As part of the ACTION questionnaire *What Makes a Good SOV?* several SOV directors responded to the issue of secure funding. Security is needed to create constituency, permit a staff to strive to achieve its goals, and to present a viable posture of confidence and strength. It is imperative that a reliable and secure funding base exist, and states considering the creation of an SOV must address the matter of long-term funding sources.

ACTION

ACTION's role in the funding of SOVs during the past fifteen years has been the greatest aid to the creation of such offices nationwide. The grants were awarded to a number of states to provide financial assistance and incentive to establish an SOV. The ACTION award guidelines clearly asserted that individual grants were not permanent and would be reduced yearly. It was expected that states would assume full financial support for the Office after the ACTION grant period expired. During the grant period, the SOV staff was to secure funding for the Office. Such action would translate into the institutionalization of the Office. However, many SOVs closed as a result of not securing funds when the grant money ran out.

The status of funding by ACTION is uncertain at this time.

State

The SOV can be funded wholly by state government. The Office can be created and established directly as a state government department or it can be introduced through the

governor's office. The latter is the most usual and probably the most preferable. If the Office is created by executive order, funds are available for the duration of the incumbent's term. During these years, the Office would operate under the governor's budget. This affords the Office time to strive to meet its goals, one of which is permanent financial stability. When the Office is a part of the governor's office, during its early developing years, staff members do not have to expend all of their energy on securing funds for its survival; rather, they can concentrate on their programs and goals. Institutionalization, that is, getting the Office legislated permanently as a state government department, is a priority goal that will ensure the continuity of the program.

Private

Another means by which to secure funds for the SOV is through private contributions. The Office could be fully or partially funded by private agencies or businesses. For example, the staff and operation of the Office could be supported by state funds, but specific project expenses such as statewide conferences and workshops could be met through contributions.

In Wyoming, private funding successfully sustains the Wyoming Volunteer Assistance Corporation (SOV). John F. Freeman, Executive Director comments:

... consider emphasizing the need for an SOV to be both publicly and privately funded. Indeed, we in Wyoming are developing a state office of volunteerism which, in its third year, is scheduled to be at least 65% privately-funded. ... For it is a fact that volunteering and charitable giving are two sides of the same coin: a strong nonprofit sector.

Several SOV directors have expressed their concerns that funding the SOV with private monies places the Office in a competitive relationship with the volunteer organizations within the state. The assertion is based upon the idea that if the SOV solicits funds from private agencies, then the SOV will be using funds that local volunteer organizations need. Another drawback related to private funding is the uncertainty of its continued availability. One director observed that a privately funded SOV might tend to be somewhat exclusive in its delivery of services, whereas an SOV in state government must, by law, be inclusive. SOVs supported by private funds might also cause biases in matters of ownership and policy decisions. Considering all the drawbacks that are associated with private funding, it is recommended that the SOV be funded by the state government. However, this matter depends upon the circumstances within a particular state. If research determines that private funding is most favorable, or state funds are absolutely unavailable or insufficient, then the initiators of the SOV must decide what is best for the statewide volunteer community.

The Cost

The actual cost of operating an SOV varies from state to state according to the extent of services and programs, size of staff, and other expenses. Although complete data were not available for analysis, examples of total annual operating costs were reported by a number of states. Arkansas reported that its cost for 1988 was \$332,800. The State of Illinois reported an annual operating budget of \$120,000 while the State of Nevada was allotted \$60,000.

[See Appendices D - F for examples of SOV budgets.]

SUMMARY

Success of the SOV may be assured when those responsible for its creation attend to the many steps that will be required to institutionalize it. The research and planning aspect should not be neglected if the Office is to be established according to the needs of a particular state. Research and planning also estimates the political and volunteer environments to ensure the Office's continuity. Support and networking allow the Office to extend its staff and its productivity, and to become a solid part of the statewide volunteer community. Without these two essential factors, the SOV will not only be ineffective, but it implicitly will be running counter to the very reason for its existence as the liaison for local volunteer efforts. A preferable location for the SOV is one that promotes the Office's activities, provides accessibility to all of the state departments, and is available to its constituents and the public. The source or sources of funding for the SOV should not threaten the local organizations and these funds must be dependable. *The creation process of the SOV reflects on the Office long after its establishment and can be the cause of failure or the catalyst for success.*

Section III.

**ORGANIZATION
AND
MAINTENANCE**

STAFF

The efforts of the staff of the SOV ultimately determine if the Office is to succeed and the level of success it will attain. The hiring of staff must be thoughtfully executed. Staff energy, ingenuity, and abilities are the basic ingredients of success. Generally, the director or coordinator is hired first. If the Office is associated with the governor's office then the governor can appoint a director or coordinator. If the advisory committee is established prior to the Office, as is recommended, then committee members could select the individual to fill the director's position. Once the Coordinator/Director is selected, he or she can hire the rest of the staff. Examples of titles of support staff positions are: Assistant/Associate Director/Coordinator, Information Officer/Media Specialist, Community Development Specialist, Secretary/Office Manager/Administrative Assistant, and Training Specialist. [See Appendices G - N for sample job descriptions.] The number of paid staff depends on need and the availability of funds. In 1988, the number of these positions varied from 1 in Nevada to 10 in Arkansas. The number of paid staff should be able to expand in proportion to increased demand of services. If not, the Office will be overburdened, quality programs will not be adequately maintained, and the statewide volunteer community will not be properly served.

The use of volunteers is one means by which the SOV staff can be expanded. As the SOV is the representative and advocate of statewide volunteerism it is definitely recommended that the Office utilize "in-house" volunteers. Individuals who volunteer their time to the SOV can assume the role of consultant, advisory committee member, office clerk, computer specialist, or any other role that will assist the Office. A number of states use in-house volunteers. Today, ten volunteers work for the Minnesota Office of Volunteer Services and thirty-five for the Arkansas Office of Volunteerism. Documentation of the benefits derived, including the cost value of time contributed by volunteers in the SOV, is important as an example for other SOVs and for local volunteer organizations and agencies. If not already doing so, each SOV can greatly augment a staff and symbolize the Office's commitment to volunteerism in the manner of "practice what you preach."

In response to the ACTION questionnaire *What Makes a Good SOV?* the importance of a staff that is competent, credible, and communicates well was emphasized by a number of SOV directors. Examples of these comments are:

“Very important — must especially know the community leaders, press and civic organizations in order to include their skills in volunteer activities.”

“The staff will be conceived as being the experts in the volunteer field and, therefore, should be equipped to fulfill that expectation.”

“This is absolutely essential. Winners can make almost any program succeed and just the opposite is true. Nothing is more critical than this point.”

“Staff *must* be committed and a strong advocate of volunteerism and the professional image of quality volunteer management. The Director should have some knowledge of politics without being overtly political on controversial issues.”

One problem mentioned by several directors pertains to the formation of a new staff and a new Office. A new staff might experience uncertainty of the SOV's exact mission and how to start to work toward their goals. Some type of training period to inform and orient staff would help alleviate this problem. In 1978, a review of the SOV Program was conducted by ACTION. It was reported that SOV directors and ACTION officials, when asked about the kind of training that would be most helpful to new staff members, listed in rank order: administration/management, programming, training for trainers, public relations, and grantsmanship.⁹

These training types are valuable to new SOV staff, but who can provide the expertise? Possibly, The National Assembly of State Offices of Volunteerism could assist in this matter. As stated in the minutes of the Assembly's October 11, 1987 meeting, one of the Assembly's objectives was to “Develop a mechanism for promoting the utilization of existing SOVs and for *assisting in the creation of new SOVs.*” Another possibility is for the state that is establishing the SOV to contact for information, or employ an appropriate staff member of an established SOV to conduct training sessions. Training staff members reduces uncertainty and is cost effective.

Selection of staff for the SOV must be based upon their qualifications and their motivation. The number of staff is dependent on the availability of funds and need; the latter of which is determined by an evaluation of existing SOVs and a study of volunteerism in that particular state. The use of volunteers in, or as part of, the SOV increases the number of staff, provides valuable assistance to the SOV, and enhances the quantity and quality of services that can be offered. Training new staff in the areas outlined in the 1978 ACTION study is recommended. Still, staff ability, eagerness, and commitment ultimately determine the level and quality of productivity.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

An advisory committee, council, or board is a valuable asset to the SOV. The committee is a statewide representative group of individuals associated with volunteerism who are usually appointed by the governor. This organization of community leaders represents the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. It supports and advises the SOV in its programming and in the pursuit of its goals. The advisory committee assures that the SOV's performance reflects the needs of the state. The role of the advisory committee, as its name implies, is to advise. The committee, after careful consideration, offers advice, suggestions, or recommendations to the SOV.

The structure and purpose of an advisory committee differ from state to state, but a model is sufficient to highlight its main features. The total membership of the committee might reflect the concerns of the three sectors with equal membership representation: 1/3 public, 1/3 private, and 1/3 non-profit. The key to a successful advisory committee is to have active and motivated individuals fill the positions. One means to obtain proficient members is to prepare a sizeable list of proposed members from which the governor may make his appointments. In this way, the SOV can exercise some control over the selection of its advisory committee. A chairperson, elected by the committee or appointed by the governor, conducts the meetings of the advisory committee. It is important that a chairperson take an active role and not just assume a figurehead position.

Nancy Richardson, Chairperson of the advisory committee to the New Jersey Office of Volunteerism commented.

A volunteer Advisory Committee for the SOV is a must. It helps to sanction the work of the Office. It evaluates the programs that the SOV implements. Overall, if operating correctly, it is the eyes and ears throughout the state for the SOV.

The chairperson should be able to work closely with the SOV Director and should understand the importance of the teamwork needed in this committee. It is important that each member feel a part of the goals and work of the SOV—that their input is important to the SOV's success.

The members of the committee can be formed into sub-committees that report to the total committee about special projects. Length of membership on the committee is usually limited to a specified term. It is important to establish definite terms of office for membership to ensure

that “new blood” is continuously added to the committee. Terms of office for membership can also serve as a vehicle to remove inactive members who perhaps were appointed to the committee merely as an honorary gesture. New members bring with them new talents and perspectives, while the members who are rotating out of the committee remain supportive of the SOV after their terms have expired. Thus, there is a continual broadening of the Office’s community leader constituency. Committee meetings are usually held three to six times per year.

The advisory committee to the New Jersey Office of Volunteerism established the following goals:

- To identify and prioritize the most important community needs and the resources to meet those needs through volunteerism.
- To recognize and reward successful examples of private initiatives and community partnerships, and to provide those role models to other communities facing similar challenges.
- To identify regulatory and statutory impediments to volunteer activity and to explore and suggest legislative solutions to increase volunteerism.
- To encourage involvement of the private sector through partnerships and the contribution of resources (time, funds, and efforts); strengthening and meeting the needs of the state’s communities.

The advisory committee can perform another function that relates to the creation of the SOV. If the advisory committee is formed before the SOV, as recommended earlier in this text, the Office would be well served. The advisory committee can define the purpose, design the structure, oversee a research study, plan programs and policy, generate a constituency, and hire a director for the SOV. Within a limited amount of time, the SOV has to establish itself and get itself legislated. If the advisory committee is established first, it can accomplish many preliminary steps that will help the SOV succeed.

At the State Offices of Volunteerism meeting, held at the 1988 AVA National Conference in Denver, SOV directors suggested many possible contributions that can be made by an advisory committee. The committee may provide technical assistance support such as in fund raising, training, program and policy development, SOV personnel selection process,

consultation, and supply project steering groups for surveys, conferences, and award selections. The advisory committee earns clout, lends credibility, and is a source of financial support in all three sectors. Members of the committee may also function as “staff extenders”, for example, by giving a workshop or speaking at a statewide conference. The advisory committee also solidifies the SOV’s future by constructing long-range plans. It is important that the SOV has an advisory committee that is active and productive.

The advisory committee, comprised of representatives from the public, private, and non-profit sector, works to promote volunteerism statewide through supporting the SOV. The committee is advisory in nature and does not have absolute jurisdiction. The structure of the committee promotes its effectiveness and establishes a strong statewide network. It is recommended that an advisory committee, council, or board be formed prior to the establishment of an SOV in order to assist in its creation. The mission of an advisory committee is to recognize, encourage, and expand volunteerism statewide through the strengthening of private/public/non-profit partnerships.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

When considering the maintenance and organization of the SOV, administrative support is important. The daily needs of the Office must be met if it is to function efficiently. Otherwise, the staff is hindered with operational problems and the SOV’s programs are adversely affected. The location of the SOV will greatly determine the type of administrative support the Office will receive. Support offered by state government further illustrates the benefits of locating the SOV within it. If a particular service is needed that the state cannot provide, then private services could be purchased. A state government support system can readily be tapped so that the SOV staff can better concentrate on programs.

SUMMARY

The organization and maintenance of an SOV provide a barometer for success of the Office. Staff roles must be defined clearly and qualified individuals must be selected for the positions. The expansion of a staff can be accomplished by the use of volunteers which simultaneously demonstrates the SOV's commitment to volunteerism. An advisory committee performs a significant function before and after the creation of the SOV. An SOV without an effective advisory committee lacks a valuable resource. Attaining a legislative mandate of the Office must be a priority. However, although a mandated Office is preferred because of greater stability, it too must recognize that it may lose some benefits which are usually associated with the governor's office. As long as the SOV functions as part of the governor's office, or as a private organization, the permanence of the Office is uncertain. Preferably, the Office will be mandated through legislation that will result in the Office's institutionalization. [See Strategies for Survival.]

Section IV.

**FUNCTIONS, DUTIES,
AND SERVICES —
AN OVERVIEW**

ADVOCACY AND RECOGNITION

Advocacy and recognition are important and should be on-going activities in the field of volunteerism. Volunteers, although not paid monetarily, can be rewarded through demonstrations of appreciation and supported through acts of advocacy. It is relative whether volunteer efforts are recognized through a formal ceremony or a simple “thank you”, or if volunteer advocacy takes the form of an extended media campaign or an individual lobbying for one piece of legislature. Volunteer programs must continue to implement and emphasize advocacy and recognition through activities if current volunteers are to be retained and new volunteers are to be recruited. Individual volunteers and volunteer administrators should receive their just merit. Only then will American volunteerism sustain its vitality and expand.

The SOV, as a member of a state volunteer community, should adhere to the principle and practice of the importance of advocacy and recognition. The SOV is viewed as the principal statewide advocate of volunteerism, and as such, should originate recognition activities which are directed toward volunteers, volunteer administrators, local and statewide volunteer agencies, state government departmental volunteer programs, and the public. An SOV is the symbol of volunteerism for its state and should assume a role model stance. This is not to mean that volunteer programs in a state should duplicate the SOV activities, but use them as examples. The idea that a sum is greater than its parts applies to the advocacy and recognition of statewide, and for that matter, national volunteerism. It is also true that the sum is only as great as the quality of its parts. The SOV and volunteer programs ideally work together to enhance the advocacy and recognition of volunteerism which subsequently recruits volunteers and enhances volunteerism.

There are many types of recognition and advocacy that the SOV can implement. Volunteer recognition and advocacy activities also promote the SOV itself. Each activity might develop into an on-going program or occur as a one-time event. Individual SOVs emphasize particular forms of recognition and advocacy depending on the state’s needs, but the element of creativity is a common factor. Feature articles in a newsletter, bumperstickers, radio public service announcements, billboards, posters, television interviews, videos, letters of commendation, media campaigns, certificates, brochures, workshops, conferences, and press releases are a few examples used by SOVs across the nation for the purpose of advocacy and recognition. Directors of different Offices have shared tried methods and continue to offer advice and ideas

to each other. Actually, all of the SOV's activities are innately directed toward the advocacy and recognition of volunteer efforts in the state, but the following are generally regarded as the primary or standard advocacy and recognition functions of an SOV.

National Volunteer Week

Each year a week is designated as National Volunteer Week (dates set in April by VOLUNTEER The National Center) to recognize and honor volunteers and all who assist volunteers each day. National Volunteer Week is the highlight of the year for recognition and advocacy by the SOV. This one week, however, should by no means be the only time aimed at recognition and advocacy. During National Volunteer Week, volunteerism is publicly recognized and honored and the SOV plays an important role in promoting the occasion.

The SOV is the spearhead of the National Volunteer Week activities in a state. First, the director can request that a gubernatorial proclamation [See Appendix R] be written and signed to officially declare a week of volunteer recognition in the state in conjunction with the National Volunteer Week. The SOV may distribute copies of this proclamation to volunteers and agencies. As representatives of a state's commitment to volunteerism, the SOV staff should plan to participate at several recognition events especially during National Volunteer Week. Again, the SOV has the opportunity to use the media to promote a statewide volunteer recognition week. Other activities may include: coordination, facilitation, and technical assistance for the planned events. Two specific events that an SOV may choose to sponsor are the Governor's/State Volunteer Awards and the Volunteer Administrator of the Year Award.

Governor's/State Volunteer Awards

In 1987, many SOVs hosted annual Governor's/State Volunteer Awards ceremonies during National Volunteer Week. The Governor's/State Volunteer Awards honor those deserving individuals and groups who help to improve the lives of the people in their communities. After an intensive screening process, nominees are selected from hundreds of nominations and honored at a ceremony, preferably with the governor in attendance. Winners of the awards represent the spirit of volunteerism in the state. The media will place the award recipients in the "public eye." Several directors of SOVs expressed their concern that award recipients should not be forgotten after the ceremony, that they could attend events throughout the year, appear in journal articles, and generally remain publicly visible. The Governor's/State Volunteer Awards is one of the most singularly important functions of the SOV.

Volunteer Administrator of the Year Award

At times, it seems that volunteers receive all of the credit in the field of volunteerism and neglected are the administrators who work behind the scenes and are responsible for many of the successes. A volunteer administrator of the year award is similar to the idea of the governor's/state volunteer awards, however, this award, as its name implies, recognizes outstanding performance in the field of volunteer administration. A volunteer administrator, as defined by the Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA), is "the professional individual, salaried or nonsalaried, who works with and through volunteers to provide service to others." If such an award does not already exist in the state, the SOV should consider sponsoring or assist in the development of a volunteer administrator award program.

Several states already have an established volunteer administrator of the year award program. For example, in Delaware, The Delaware Volunteer Coordinators, and in Virginia, The Colonial Virginia Association for Volunteer Administrators sponsor this type of award. In each of these states, the SOV recognizes, assists, and supports the award program. The New Jersey Office of Volunteerism is currently developing a volunteer administrator award program that will be presented at its statewide conference on volunteerism. The criteria used in Virginia for judging the nominations are based on the Certification of Volunteer Administrators (CVA). The directors of the New Jersey, Delaware, and Virginia Offices of Volunteerism stated a volunteer administrator award should be separate from a volunteer award to ensure that one would not detract from the other.

Gubernatorial Advocacy

The governor is the first advocate of volunteerism. Here again, in the area of advocacy and recognition, the importance of the support of the governor for the SOV becomes clearer. When the governor supports the SOV, he/she lends credibility to the Office's advocacy and recognition activities. When the governor appears at a conference or ceremony for volunteers the event is automatically heightened for the participants and for the public through news coverage. Some governors' efforts, on behalf of volunteerism have included: signing proclamations, keynote speeches at award ceremonies and statewide conferences, providing television and radio announcements, and mentioning volunteerism in the state-of-the-state addresses.

The director of an SOV must maintain a positive relationship with the governor to attain his/her support. One possible means to ensure the governor's support is to make him/her

aware of the advantages of supporting volunteerism through a state office oriented directly for this purpose. For example, the director may present the governor with the view that volunteerism is a nonpolitical matter and that a large part of the population is involved. The governor who supports the SOV represents the importance of and the state's commitment to volunteerism. This serves as a signal to the volunteer community and all of the citizens of the state that bettering the quality of life is a priority.

Advocacy of Legislation

The SOV's role of advocacy and recognition regarding legislation is that of an information clearinghouse. Either a staff member, volunteer, intern, or a member of the governor's counsel researches and monitors legislation that is applicable to volunteers, volunteer administrators, and volunteer organizations. Such legislation would include: liability, taxes, workers compensation, employment credit, and insurance. The SOV may become involved further in the course of pending legislation by presenting testimony and technical information, encouraging policy makers, and proposing new types of legislation favorable to volunteerism. [Each state has different statutes regulating state government offices and their relationship to the legislative branch which may or may not permit the SOV to participate in these activities.] At the recently convened AVA meeting in Denver, the SOV directors agreed that "sharing information" about pending legislation is a proper role. Keeping the state's volunteer population and the public informed of state and national laws and legislative developments is a valuable and necessary service in these times when much is happening in this area. Legislative information may be disseminated through a special pamphlet, the newsletter, workshops, or telephone consultation. The publication, *Georgia Volunteers and the Law*, a joint effort of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Office of Volunteer Services, and the State Bar of Georgia, is an example of providing information concerning the legal rights and obligations of volunteers and volunteer organizations.

Other Advocacy and Recognition Activities

SOVs throughout the country have implemented many kinds of recognition and advocacy activities over the past fifteen years. Hosting banquets, participating in state fairs, setting up resource information tables, organizing legislators and volunteers to speak in front of the state house, sponsoring workshops aimed at advocacy and recognition, and creating brochures,

pamphlets, and certificates are a few examples of these activities. The successful SOV continues to strive to develop new and innovative forms of advocacy and recognition.

The advocacy and recognition function of the SOV is actually a process of indirect volunteer recruitment. Volunteer populations seem to increase in relation to the increase of public awareness of volunteerism. This is understandable given the marketing strategies that underlie the field of advertising. If then, the SOV contributes through advocacy and recognition, an increase in the state volunteer population may, in part, be attributed to the SOV. In this capacity the SOV is a strong moving force as it generates new volunteers through advocacy and recognition.

COMMUNICATIONS

Introduction

Communication within the volunteer community is extremely important. Limited funds, in comparison to a great and diverse amount of needs, make it absolutely necessary for volunteer programs to work together by economically using and sharing their resources so duplication of effort does not occur. This is the foundation for a strong and sound statewide volunteer community's economy. It can be achieved through effective communication and organization among all concerned. Without an SOV, the means to coordinate the activities of volunteer organizations can not occur. Neither can any individual organization fulfill such a role.

Volunteers, volunteer agencies, and other citizens of the state need a central statewide information clearinghouse service. SOVs can assume this role. They can assist by developing a communication network and acting as the focal point for the entire state volunteer community. The SOV is both a sender and receiver of information. It is ideally suited to function as the central clearinghouse because as a part of the state government it can easily access all other state divisions and reach out to the private and non-profit sectors and the public. Communication is the elemental tool of the SOV and requires proficiency for effective use. Through the SOV's many programs and network, volunteer organizations and individuals are more practically linked. Communication avenues of the SOV may include:

Comprehensive Volunteer Agency Listing

A comprehensive list of the volunteer agencies in a state is a valuable resource. Most SOVs have developed a computerized master registry of the volunteer organizations in the state. The registry serves as a reference guide to agencies and volunteers seeking information about other organizations. The list can be used as a referral resource in areas where no volunteer centers exist. This list can also be used to determine the geographical distribution and density of volunteer agencies. An SOV may distribute copies of the list, by county, to volunteers, and volunteer agencies. This list also serves as the basis for the Office's statewide mailing.

Newsletter

The principal communication tool of the SOV is the newsletter. As an information and communication service, it is distributed to volunteers, state and local agencies, non-profit agencies, private agencies, and others who request a subscription (usually free of charge). The number of issues ranges from three to six issues per year. With a mailing list in states ranging from 1,000 to 13,000 per issue, the SOV newsletter has been described as the "eyes and ears" of the volunteer community.

The newsletter is a many faceted publication which contains various volunteer related features. It may include highlights of outstanding individual and organized volunteer efforts; report trends in the field; offer information about the Office and its services; and discuss local, state, and national issues. Volunteers and volunteer administrators will look to the newsletter for information about liability, taxes, and insurance. Articles written by staff members and guest writers, and reprinted articles enhance the newsletter. Local and regional needs are addressed by printing information about upcoming events, perhaps in calendar form, regarding training events, conferences, workshops, meetings, and public ceremonies.

Other features of the newsletter may include: notices of availability of new publications and resources in the field and in the SOV library, recognition articles, technical assistance information, funding opportunities, announcements of local, state, and national events, and a listing of available paid volunteer positions. This last example refers to the unique feature in the New Jersey Office of Volunteerism's newsletter. "Opportunity Lines," the name of this feature, is a continually updated list of paid career volunteer positions. Through this regular feature, the volunteer community is provided with a volunteerism specific classified listing of available

employment positions that call for technically skilled and professionally experienced individuals. As a variation on this theme, volunteer positions that require highly specific skills may also be listed.

Whatever type of newsletter the SOV creates, it will be its most effective method for disseminating information. The newsletter benefits the large and complex volunteer organizations as well as the individual volunteer who does not come into frequent contact with the mainstream volunteer community. The newsletter informs and unites the statewide volunteer community.

Statewide Survey

A statewide survey is a communication tool that gathers information and renders data about the volunteer agencies in the state. Results of an in-depth survey can be used to interpret the resources and needs of the volunteer community. This survey, actually a needs assessment study, is developed and implemented by the SOV in order to determine the most accurate and current information about the state's volunteer programs. If the SOV has defined the volunteer community and its needs, it can plan for the future rather than react to immediate demands. The survey may be repeated periodically to reassess the needs of volunteer programs, volunteer administrators, volunteers, and those served by volunteers.

The Arkansas Office of Volunteerism conducted an excellent study of this nature entitled *Economic Impact of Arkansas Volunteers — 1985*.

Other Communications

As the central communication link in a state, the SOV practices many other forms of communication. It publishes in journals, fills requests for information, acts as a middleman by linking professional talents with volunteer programs, issues press releases, publishes pamphlets and brochures, and writes correspondences. Much of the Office's communication is verbal: conversations on the telephone, in-person meetings, speaking engagements, telephone conference calls, and consultations. In addition, the SOV is placed on mailing lists and receives materials from the major national and state human services organizations. These materials may be redistributed by the SOV.

The North Carolina Office of Citizen Affairs summed up the importance of the SOV as a

communication center in its 1981 *Report to the Governor*. The study revealed that, in North Carolina, "local programs were all suffering from . . . fragmented communication with local and state government agencies trying to do many of the same things."¹⁰ The North Carolina Citizen Affairs program, The Community Affairs Network, brought these groups and others like them into a statewide network to exchange information, encourage volunteerism, and link community resources. Herein lies the main argument and justification for the necessity of a communication center for the vast and vital statewide volunteer community. The SOV, in turn, must possess a staff with strong communication skills and the ability to develop effective communication programs in order to establish itself as the volunteer communication center.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

In fulfillment of its function to facilitate and coordinate within the volunteer community, the SOV offers various types of technical assistance to the entire state volunteer community. The state can provide direct technical assistance, through the SOV, to the numerous volunteer programs that contribute to the well-being of its citizens. The kinds of technical assistance that the SOV provides is contingent upon the volunteer community and the state. For instance, one SOV might offer training to an individual volunteer program, while another SOV may initiate a workshop by which program directors conduct a forum about training techniques. Generally, the SOV aims its technical assistance at levels that will reach the most parties.

Statewide Conference on Volunteerism

The statewide conference is the main technical assistance activity of the SOV. In most states, the conference is hosted as an annual event. During the conference, workshops and speeches are attended by a considerable assemblage of the state volunteer community. This event, the only one of its kind in the state, is a special and important event. Every state should make it possible for such a large group of individuals who work in the field of volunteerism in the same state to join and participate in a statewide conference.

As the sponsor of the statewide conference, the SOV must attend to many items. The first matter to settle is funding. Three possible sources of funding are: participant fees, state funds,

and contributions. Most common is a combination of these sources. Planning an event on this scale requires attention to many details. SOV staff must: select workshop leaders, construct a schedule, collect conference fees and registrations, develop brochures, secure a facility, and arrange for volunteers to work the day of the conference.

Participants can expect to take advantage of many aspects of the statewide conference. The event provides technical assistance through workshops pertaining to volunteer recruitment and retention, liability and insurance, recognition, printed materials, public relations, volunteer administration, and fund raising. These workshops furnish the most recent ideas and techniques from peers in the field. Also offered is timely information about changes that will affect volunteers and volunteer programs and the techniques and problem solving devices to use to meet new demands.

Further, the statewide conference allows participants to convene for “informal” networking and information sharing. This is a great added benefit. Results of conference interaction may include: identification of common problems and possible solutions, new contacts, and initiation of planning processes. The statewide conference not only provides technical assistance, but it gives the members of the volunteer community a vision, it reassures individuals that they are not working alone toward goals — it projects the “big picture.”

Workshops and Conferences

In addition to the statewide conference many SOVs sponsor regional workshops and conferences. The regional workshop enables the SOV to reach specific areas of a state, affording it the opportunity to tailor programs to meet the needs of a particular volunteer community. Physical size of a state may prohibit a statewide conference which should be available to all members of the volunteer community. Through regional sessions effective technical assistance can be provided at the local level.

Resource Library

The SOV is the most suitable location for a statewide volunteer resource library. As volunteerism rapidly increases, more and more printed materials and other resources are becoming available. Most public libraries simply cannot keep up with the amount of newly released resources. A portion of the SOV's budget should be allocated for the purpose of the

acquisition of volunteer related resource materials and the building of a special collection. A volunteer or intern might be responsible for the operation of the library.

The SOV continuously compiles books, periodicals, videos, articles, and other materials related to the field of volunteerism. The funding of an SOV resource library is a prudent investment. An extensive and centrally located library that can be connected to other libraries is most desirable. The SOV can also tap into other state and national libraries. With the aid of a computer, it can keep its listings up-to-date and send copies to constituents. The SOV usually lends materials at no charge, and a borrower need only to pay for return postage. This SOV resource is a most valuable aid to the volunteer community.

Training

The SOV provides various types of direct and indirect training services. Public, private, and non-profit agencies may request technical assistance in the form of training to create or enhance volunteer programs. The director or appropriate SOV staff member, for example, a Training Specialist, must decide whether the SOV will provide the training or if it will indirectly provide the training by serving as facilitator. The SOV, with its skilled staff and its extensive network is able to serve as a statewide resource for training.

The SOV may elect to conduct individualized training sessions in order to fulfill a request. This direct oriented training may include: presentations, on-site visits, telephone consultations, meetings, and workshops. Such training services may be delivered to an individual or to groups. Direct training is time consuming and so the frequency of training engagements should be carefully considered. The mission of an SOV is not only that of a provider of training, and if it becomes too involved with preparations for training and training commitments, its other functions will suffer. In most cases, training should be aimed at senior staff so that the SOV can train the trainers who will in turn train others. By this approach, the SOV reaches the most people, maximizes its efforts, and achieves a greater impact.

Most often, the SOV is viewed as the provider of indirect training. In this way, the SOV acts as a conduit and arranges, rather than conducts the training. The SOV identifies paid and unpaid trainers who are experts in a particular area and links them with the individual or agency requesting the training. Again, the SOV can tap its vast network, including its advisory committee, state agencies, private corporations, and non-profit agencies to locate apt trainers.

The statewide conference, workshops, training programs, and individual consultations are typical means of delivering indirect training. The SOV can sponsor or co-sponsor these events.

Both direct and indirect training enable the SOV to enhance the development, professionalization, and the growth of volunteerism throughout the state. The SOV acts as a link and catalyst for the private, public, and non-profit sectors so that they may share resources such as trainers, which then will build their volunteer community. Therefore, the necessity for a state agency to assume this role is important. Further, if a state desired to provide training assistance to a volunteer agency or establish a volunteer program within state government without an SOV which agency would be equipped to fulfill this role?

Other Technical Assistance

The SOV may offer other types of technical assistance. It assists in the development of new programs and the maintenance of those that exist. The Office provides direct mail correspondence and telephone consultation regarding: training, awards, the resource library, legislation, and other matters related to volunteerism. The SOV may also work to help to create and support new DOVIAs (Directors of Volunteers in Agencies) and VACs (Volunteer Action Centers). Further, in many states, the director and assistant director of the SOV attend other agencies' meetings, hold membership on advisory committees, and deliver public speeches. Special projects represent flexible and responsible programming. Volunteerism within state government, educational programs related to volunteerism in schools, and a speakers bureau are several examples of successful projects. It is through such technical assistance programs that the SOV is able to maintain its active role in the volunteer community.