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Follow-Up

AVA's Code of Ethics: An Excerpt

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 for 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:

● Have an understanding of the history, the goals, the ethical implications and the basic principles of volunteerism both philosophical and practical.
● Be in communication with colleagues who can contribute to the continuing growth of his/her own philosophy.
● Share that philosophy with immediate staff in the development of the volunteer program and of staff relationships.
● Develop a volunteer program that is consistent with the philosophy held and be able to interpret why volunteers should or should not be involved in certain roles.
● Interpret to the community, the staff, the recipients of the service, and the

volunteers the rationale for volunteerism.

Principle 7. 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:

● Maintain high standards of professional competence.

● Act with integrity and objectivity in the professional role.

● Work for implementation of ethical practices in all types of volunteerism in the community.

● Refrain from any action which takes advantage of information or situations arising from professional contacts.

● 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.

● Accept employment in an agency or organization only when it is possible, with integrity, to align himself/herself with its policies and goals.

● Work within the accepted structures and procedures of the employing agency or organization or work in open and constructive ways to bring about change.

● Assure the validity of information used in publications, news releases or other informational devices before becoming responsible for its release.

● Accept responsibility for providing professional consultation consistent with his/her own personal integrity and will request and accept consultation when it is needed.

● Carry on continuous and realistic evaluations 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.

● Work diligently to enhance his/her own professional growth.

● Contribute to the expanding body of knowledge about volunteerism.

● Assume a fair share of responsibility for the effective functioning and development of the professional organization of which he/she is a member.

Neighborhood Networks

Caring, Cooperating in Rock Island

By Alice L. Barnett

MOST PEOPLE ASSOCIATE ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS, with the old folk song about the once famous, now almost defunct, Rock Island railroad—or perhaps with its infamous Civil War prison known as "The Andersonville of the North."

Today, however, there is much more concern with this old Mississippi River town's immediate history—that of slow neighborhood decay, rising crime rates, and dropping property values. Three years ago, some seventy church and neighborhood leaders gathered in a church basement in one of the town's older neighborhoods to discuss these problems. Their greatest worry was over the social deterioration that accompanied the neighborhood's physical decline. Few neighbors knew one another; even fewer had any hope that their neighborhoods could change for the better.

Led by Rev. Ken Kuenning, pastor of the Church of Peace (a member congregation of the United Chruch of

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Christ), and the Church's Christian Task Force of Lay Leaders, the neighbors began to pull together the Rock Island Community Caring Conference (CCC). This new organization would encourage neighbors to meet one another and to cooperate in neighborhood improvement programs.

They were aided in their efforts by a denominational grant from UCC's Illinois northern region, which allowed the church to hire a staff person to assist in organizing the neighborhood.

The Church of Peace soon was joined by four other churches—St. Joseph Catholic Parish, Central Presbyterian Church, Olivet Baptist Church and Second Baptist Church, the latter two the largest black congregations.

Organizing began in northwest Rock Island—a section of older neighborhoods where 80 percent of the houses are over 30 years old, 48 percent of the properties are rentals, and the median property value is 30 percent lower than the rest of the region. Of the 10,000 peo-