Leadership

formerly
Voluntary Action
Leadership magazine

OCT-DEC
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Older Volunteers — Setting Trends

The National and Community Service Trust Act

Is Your Volunteer Program Ready for 2001?

Volunteering, Russian Style

THE PROMISE OF A NATION

VOLUNTEERS

The 1994 National Community Service Conference

"Volunteers, The Promise of a Nation"—that's the theme selected for the 1994 National Community Service Conference set for June 11-14 at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C. and hosted by The Points of Light Foundation.

During the Conference, we will focus on the vital role all of us can play in enriching the future of our nation through volunteer community service. Whether you are part of a Volunteer Center, nonprofit organization, corporation, or government agency, this is the conference you can't afford to miss.

To receive information on the 1994 National Community Service Conference, including program, registration, and hotel information, please fill out the form below and send it to:

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FOUNDATION

1994 National Community Service Conference
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☐ **I am interested in participating in a community service project while attending the Conference in Washington, D.C.**

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Look for a cover feature on leadership by Nancy Macduff in the January-March issue of *Leadership*. Macduff, a highly respected trainer and author on volunteer management topics, will present five qualities that distinguish the successful leader.

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Leadership

Formerly
Voluntary Action Leadership

October-December 1993

Published by The Points of Light Foundation

 Leadership is published quarterly by The Points of Light Foundation. Bulk postage paid at Washington, D.C. Subscriptions: $20 one year; $38 two years; $56 three years. Outside U.S.: Canada add $2; foreign add $4. Change of address and other subscription-related matters: Write to CIRCULATION, *Leadership*, 1737 H Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006. When sending change of address, send both old and new addresses, including zip code; allow at least six weeks for change to take effect. All other correspondence should be directed to: Editor, *Leadership*, Points of Light Foundation, 1737 H Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006. Phone: 202-223-9186.

The Points of Light Foundation is a nonpartisan organization dedicated to motivating leaders to mobilizing others in meaningful community service aimed at alleviating our most serious social problems.

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Debate about 'The Corporation'

October 1993

Since our last issue of *Leadership*, President Bill Clinton has signed the National and Community Service Trust Act. The legislation authorizes funding for a number of community service activities including continued federal funding for The Points of Light Foundation. The creation of the Corporation for National and Community Service (broadly referred to as "The Corporation") is certainly the most ambitious endeavor contained in the legislation.

Much has been said and written about stipended service as a financial means to attain a college education. Congress members argued about the cost of the stipend provision in the Act partly because of how it might affect traditionally funded college loan programs. Much of the volunteer community is troubled because of the perception that the legislation and specifically The Corporation focuses on youth service while dismissing the rest of the volunteer community.

Starting with this issue, we plan to share with you information about the implementation of the legislation and the development of The Corporation. We also invite you to share your opinions and observations regarding these issues with us.

We believe that despite the uncertainties surrounding the National and Community Service Trust Act, the debate will raise the awareness about the importance of volunteerism and service. The value of that is something on which all of us can agree.

Barbara L. Lohman
Coordinating Vice President
Communications

Points of View

Positioning Your Volunteer Program for the 21st Century

By Steve McCurley

"We are confronted by insurmountable opportunities."
—Kata Sutra

There are some things about volunteer programs that I have always found fascinating. My favorite is that most people who manage volunteer programs come to that job with an enormous amount of ignorance about what they are getting into. That isn't a criticism, by the way; just an observation. You can readily see its truth, however. If you are a volunteer manager, how much did you know about working with volunteers before you began the job? Did you ever take a course in it? Obtain a degree? Set out to master the history of the field before starting work? Do you even know that the field *has* a history?

Probably not. Most volunteer managers start their positions with little or no formal training, and then proceed to do a fairly wondrous job of "discovering" what they are supposed to do. Sometimes they do it by what I refer to as "Sound Management"—trying things out and changing them if people yell too much. Sometimes they do it by simply imitating what has gone before, hoping that it will continue to work.

The great but subtle disadvantage to this approach, particularly for those who are overworked and unable ever to go back and fully gain that missing education, is that it precludes taking a look at the "Big Picture," thinking about how what is going on in one's program relates to the overall flow in volunteering and about what changes in that flow may imply for future program operation.

What follows is an attempt to make some suggestions about where the historical flow seems to be going, written with the intent of helping programs start now to make the changes that will position them for better operation in coming years. The suggestions fall into three areas.

Get Diverse

For much of their history, volunteer programs were opportunities for people of common interests to come together. Quite often these people were of common backgrounds, which easily explained why they had common interests to work on. The future of volunteerism, however, is rapidly moving toward a very different direction, that of diversity, and is manifesting itself in two specific areas—diversity of volunteer jobs and diversity of volunteers.

The successful program of the future will be the program that offers the greatest variety of volunteer jobs. This variety will occur in a number of ways: variety in time commitment, variety in scope and difficulty of the work, and variety in the type of work to be done. We are entering a world in which people expect choices, and volunteers are becoming less and less amenable to a "take it or leave it" approach. A volunteer program with only one type of volunteer opportunity is a lot like a store that sells one product in one size and one color—some people will love it, but a lot of people won't be interested at all.

Attracting the volunteer of the future is a competitive task, and that competition will become easier as you have more possibilities to offer. For the program manager this means making jobs flexible in terms of different "sizes" (short-term, long-term, evenings, weekends, etc.), and different "shapes" (at the office, at home, with family, working with youth, etc.).

Frank Wylie of California State University observes that "Volunteer jobs, for the most part, haven't changed. Staff is still recruiting by the numbers...asking professional women to come in and do menial clerical jobs. It's a wonder that we still have as many volunteers as we do, especially as we have never recruited men or young people well. It is we who have not learned to recruit and utilize the modern volunteer effectively."

Volunteer management is the management of people, and *as the American population becomes more diverse, volunteer programs need to follow.* One of the most useful pieces of information from the Gallup surveys on giving and volunteering is the simple statistic that people are more than three times as likely to volunteer when asked than when they are not. Among the 44 percent of respondents who reported that they were asked to volunteer during the past year, 86 percent volunteered; among the 55 percent who were not asked, only 24 percent volunteered. Those least likely to be asked to

volunteer were Blacks, Hispanics, youth, seniors and those with low incomes, but among the small populations of these groups who were asked, the proportion who volunteered was nearly four times higher than the proportion of those who were not asked.

The significance of all this is quite simple: If you can reach people and directly ask them to volunteer for you, they are likely to do so. They are even more likely to do so if they feel some link or connection with the person who asked, such as a friend, neighbor or co-worker.

Programs that are not diverse find it increasingly hard to recruit for the simple reason that they quickly use up the pool of potential volunteers to whom they are "linked." Picture this: If my program is made up of three volunteers, all from similar backgrounds, it is very likely that they have a lot of friends in common. If they are from different backgrounds, it is very likely that they have a much wider total pool of potential "links" because they will be drawing from different sets of acquaintances.

The bigger and more diverse your pool of volunteers, the wider the "net" you can cast to recruit new people. And this positive impact of diversity on recruitment actually has a cumulative effect—the more people from new backgrounds you bring in, the easier it is to bring in additional people linked to other new backgrounds. The smart volunteer manager will start widening the pool of volunteers as quickly as possible.

Get Connected

Volunteer programs have always been an excellent way for an agency to establish connections with the community. The volunteer program of the future will concentrate on building two other types of connections: external support and internal support.

■ **Building external support:** The smart volunteer manager needs to build support from the wider community of volunteer-utilizing agencies, communicating with other volunteer managers and sharing information and resources. Admiral Hyman Rickover expressed this need best: "All of us must become better informed. It is necessary for us to learn from others' mistakes. You will not live long enough to make them all yourself."

The volunteer manager who is not involved with a local DOVIA (Directors of Volunteers in Agencies) or a member of a national volunteer organization such as AVA (Association for Volunteer Administration) or The Points of Light Foundation is choosing to ignore the wisdom of others, making both job and life a lot harder.

■ **Building internal support:** The primary problem in volunteer involvement right now does not lie in finding new volunteers. It lies in enabling those who are already involved to accomplish productive work. In the past 10 years volunteer jobs have shifted to within agencies, placing volunteers more in contact and working relationships with agency staff. In many agencies the primary coordinator or supervisor of volunteers is not the volunteer manager, but the staff person with whom the volunteer works on a day-to-day basis. Most of these staff have little or no previous experience in working with volunteers.

This is a pretty silly situation. It is analogous to giving a computer to a person who has never seen one before and expecting skillful operation of it from go without a manual or any other help. But while a computer will allow you to experiment at your leisure, the average volunteer gets a bit upset at being treated as an experimental animal.

The primary worry of volunteer managers should at this point be "staff competence," the ability of staff to handle the highly technical tools that volunteers represent. This need increases dramatically as we draw from volunteer professionals who expect to be treated in a professional manner. Smart volunteer managers need to spend a little less time with their volunteers and a lot more time and energy enabling staff to make creative use of those volunteers.

Get Used to Change

One of the key learning experiences for the future is the realization that nothing should be taken as a given. Volunteer programs have experienced more changes in the past 10 years than in the previous 50. We have invented entirely new types of "volunteers"—national service participants, corporate employee teams, alternative sentencing programs, for example—and we have developed entirely new areas of

service for volunteers. But the likely reality is that the next 10 years will witness and require even greater change to accommodate what is happening in society.

The smart volunteer manager will continually need to take a fresh look at how things are done. One of the probable shifts that will occur in well-managed programs is an increased reliance on new technologies. Within 10 years, practically every volunteer program will rely on volunteer management software to keep track of volunteers, record hours and availability, and produce reports. Other programs will make use of electronic information systems to communicate with volunteers and to recruit new ones.

If you're from a generation that doesn't view computers as a comfortable way of operating, you need to realize that the children of today are growing up with computers, and that means that the adults of tomorrow will view them as *the* natural way to do things.

Even smarter volunteer managers will constantly reexamine and reevaluate *everything* they are doing, aiming not just for efficiency, but also for correctness. In the words of Peter Drucker, "There is nothing so useless as doing efficiently that which should not be done at all."

The trick for the future is not just in doing things correctly; it also lies in allocating scarce management time toward doing the *right* things. And that requires being a smart leader, not just an administrator. The reality of volunteer management is that what works today will probably not work as well tomorrow, and within 20 years may be absolutely the wrong thing to do.

Volunteer management is actually a *process*, not a particular *structure* or *thing*. The role of the volunteer manager will be to scrutinize every aspect of program operation and ask, "How do we need to adjust this so it will work?" The focus needs to be on reaching the goal and achieving the mission rather than preserving the way things are done. The future will merely require making changes even faster and more often than we have had to do in the last 10 years.

Perhaps the most exciting thing about the future is that it is bound to be different, more different than what we now know and probably more different than what we could know. This guarantees that volunteer management will continue to be a creative art, requiring imagination and daring and courage. And it guarantees that practitioners will always have a fresh approach and attitude toward their work, since much of it will always be new to them. In the words of Fresco's Discovery, "If you knew what you were doing, you'd probably be bored." The future holds a lot of possibilities for volunteer involvement, but it is safe to predict that boredom is not one of them. ■

Steve McCurley is a partner of VMSystems, a consulting firm that works with volunteer programs. He lives in Olympia, WA.

Challenges to Building Community

By James A. Joseph

Let me suggest that those who seek to play a role in building community will face at least three sets of challenges:

The first has to do with civic vitality, how you maintain the dynamism of community when the boundaries are changing conceptually, geographically and functionally. We are still romanticizing the good old days when social cohesion and civic solidarity came from a common race, a common religion or a common culture; when neighbors came together to build each other's barns. But those who analyze demographic and social trends are telling us that the community of the future is likely to be a dynamic process in which strangers meet, discover their commonality, deal with conflicts and celebrate their unity while still remaining strangers.

What this suggests, then, is that our notion of community must change conceptually, from the paradigm of a network of neighbors to the metaphor of a company of strangers.

Our notion of community is also changing functionally. In the past, we have spoken of our communities as divided among three sectors: a public sector driven by the ballot, a private sector driven by profit and a voluntary sector driven by compassion. But the functional boundaries of community are increasingly ambiguous, with the most productive sector for solving social problems being what Peter Drucker has called the fourth sector of public/private partnerships.

James A. Joseph

Thus, we are led to the second set of challenges that will influence our ability to form a more perfect union, ensure domestic tranquility and promote the general welfare. If the first set has to do with civic vitality, how you maintain the dynamism of community when the boundaries are changing, the second has to do with civic values, how we cultivate the spirit of altruism when there is so much focus on greed and selfishness.

.... Compassionate values [are] taught by the family during early childhood. I am convinced that the ability to maintain a caring society does not so much lie in the voluntary institutions we create or even the legacies we bequeath, but in our

progeny. Our children must learn from us at an early age that if the strong exploit the weak, or the rich ignore the needy, the future of our society is gravely impaired.

So we come to the third and final set of challenges which could change, significantly, the way in which we meet social needs and solve social problems. If the first has to do with civic vitality, widening the circle of community, and the second with civic values, stretching the horizons of the heart, the third has to do with civic vision, the capacity to see connections, to focus on the future, understand it, interpret it, and lead others to help create it.... It is in making the condition of others our own that we find the social cement that binds people together in a community. So we need community leaders who are willing to ask how does a community know when it is successful in realizing its vision? We generally know what is required to build a strong and vibrant physical infrastructure, but what are the elements of a strong and resilient civic infrastructure?

The members of the National Civic League have come up with what they call a civic index...They provide a road map for asking the right questions.

1. Civic Participation. A community without strong civic participation will soon find that it is not so much a community as a place. Since perception is often as important as reality, a primary question is whether people have a feeling that their participation makes a real difference in outcomes. Are there energetic, effective neighborhoods and citizen groups?

2. Community Leadership. Do local leaders seek power in order to disperse it or simply to concentrate it? Is the community looking in the right place for leadership? Are people looking for leaders with what they consider to be the right credentials, the right endorsements, the right color and complexion or are they looking in nontraditional places? Do the leaders represent, and speak for, the diverse needs of the community? Are they willing to take risks and to take the long view?

3. Government Performance. Here again perception is often as important as reality. Is the local government perceived as performing well? Is it open, accountable and compassionate? Do some neighborhoods get special treatment? Do all citizens have access?

4. Voluntarism and Philanthropy. Is there a strong civic infrastructure with thriving local volunteer centers and local foundations, for example? Is there a healthy climate for giving and volunteering? How diverse is the giving public? Is the volunteering spread across a wide spectrum of civic groups? Is most of the giving related directly to the self-interest of a family or neighborhood or does it embrace those who are outside of the primary community?

"If the first has to do with civic vitality, and the second with civic values, the third has to do with civic vision, the capacity to see connections, to focus on the future, understand it, interpret it, and lead others to help create it."

5. Intergroup Relations. Is there a healthy respect and appreciation for diversity or is difference regarded as deviance? Do newcomers feel welcome and accepted? Do the moments of community celebration encompass a broad spectrum of heritage or do they simply emphasize contributions of a dominant group? Is the diversity of the community reflected in microcosm in the visible civic, political and economic groups? ■

James Joseph, president of the Council on Foundations and appointed by President Clinton as chairman of the board of the Corporation for National and Community Service, made these remarks in an address at the 1993 National Community Service Conference.

An Enduring Basis for Moral Commitment

By Dr. John W. Gardner

What brings values alive is a willingness to work for their realization. That is the heart of a living faith. The way to show reverence for the values is to act on them if they are still relevant, and to renew them if they are not.

Humans will not give up the effort to create a moral framework. You can see it in historical and philosophical writings of the ancient world, in the great religions, in the evolving political thought of the past three centuries. You can see it in the early documents of this nation, in the writings of Jefferson and Thoreau and Lincoln, in the work of Gandhi, in Supreme Court decisions, in the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., in the devoted efforts of individuals today.

Even in those moments of history when corruption and degradation seemed wholly triumphant, there were some men and women who continued stubbornly to seek justice and liberty and a world that honored the worth and dignity of each person; there were those who worked to better the lot of their family and community, who sought more enlightened ways of thinking about the human condition. They were not all of one religion. Nor of one ethnic group. Nor did they all hail from one favored part of the globe. Some left their names in the history books; and some were perhaps never known beyond their neighborhood. It doesn't matter.

An enduring basis for moral commitment is to affirm our allegiance to those people, to all of those who have worked at the endless task of creating and recreating a framework of values. To remind ourselves that they existed is a message of solidarity for every seriously striving person.

Old Wisdom for New Times

By Virginia Austin

Dr. John Gardner

One may debate the extent to which humans can perfect themselves or their societies. But their impulse to try has accounted for the best moments in humankind's troubled history. The impulse may be layered over, ignored, or smothered by worldliness and cynicism; but it is there—and in some people, inextinguishable. We draw our spiritual strength from just those people, even though most of them are unknown to us. They are the bearers of the spirit, the lifelines of the species, stretching back through the centuries.

Most of us are not Utopians. We do not dream of a perfect world. But we cannot abandon our efforts to make it less imperfect. The world is full of absurdities that cannot be explained, evils that cannot be countenanced, injustices that cannot be excused. The individual who does not understand that is disarmed in a hazardous environment. It is the fate of humans to face risks they cannot fully understand, much less control, to live in a world of complexities that frustrate purpose, and tragedies that undermine morale.

And if there is any grandeur in the human struggle, it is in the capacity of considerable numbers of the species to fight on, to surmount the setbacks, to envision gains beyond the losses and victories beyond the defeats, to pursue dreams in a world of bleak realities. That is not softheaded idealism. In the most hardheaded terms, that is the human task. In any generation, many have turned their backs on that task. Those who did not turn their backs went on to build civilizations. ■

Dr. Gardner, holder of the Miriam & Peter Haas Professorship in Public Service at Stanford University, made the above remarks in his keynote address at the 1993 National Community Service Conference.

Introducing the concepts of The Points of Light Foundation's "Changing the Paradigm" program, President and CEO Dick Schubert called the Principles of High Effectiveness "old wisdom for new times." For me, the philosophy means examining all the possible ways of engaging volunteers and then finding ways to make them happen. Organizations of all kinds should take a look at their resources and determine new ways to take advantage of the growing numbers of people all around them who want to volunteer to help solve the serious social problems facing our communities today.

Winnie Brown, director of the Mayor's Voluntary Action Center in New York City for 23 years, once shared with me her philosophy about volunteers. Every organization, she said, should make a wish list of all the things that could enhance its effectiveness. Then its leaders should decide how many of the things on that list can be secured or accomplished with volunteers.

If the organization is really honest with itself, it usually can increase its impact substantially by engaging the resources of volunteers, says Brown. The key is the openness the organization brings to the task of examining how it does business and how it could do a better job.

Volunteers, whether they are called that or not, always have helped out in organized efforts to solve community problems. Often their most significant contributions have resulted from being encouraged to help plan the solutions. Once volunteers are empowered to use their creativity to determine solutions, they are able to marshal even greater resources than the organization dreamed possible.

Let me share an example.

Twenty years ago, the state of Oklahoma faced the problem of a crumbling and ineffective corrections system. At that time, the recidivism rate of young women offenders was very high. The crimes were primarily nonviolent, like shoplifting, bad checks, petty theft. The women were warehoused away from urban areas with no opportunities for job training, education or even training in practical living skills.

A number of citizen activists believed that this situation was draining Oklahoma's resources and, most importantly, depriving the state of potentially effective citizens. Governor Hall was approached about the concept of community-based living and training for these non-violent offenders. His response, "Create a climate for this type of facility in an urban setting, and I will support your efforts to change the system."

Once volunteers are empowered to use their creativity to determine solutions, they are able to marshal even greater resources than the organization dreamed possible.

Empowered to take the risk to make a change, the group worked with several organizations to create a positive climate for a community based treatment facility for nonviolent women offenders. They brought together community resources to teach the women. They participated in the necessary corrections training to enable them to work with the women offenders. And they worked with the women inmates to establish a model program for volunteer engagement in the corrections system.

The documented outcomes were fewer women returned to prison, education and training opportunities were made available to all incarcerated women, more citizens

participated in the system and participation in state leadership by those volunteers who risked the involvement increased. In this case, the volunteers were inspired by the respect and authority they were given to bring additional expertise and resources to assist with the solution. When you reinforce the expectation that the volunteers can do all they possibly can, you heighten the expectation that they will do everything possible to achieve the goal.

Furthermore, the positive experience for the volunteers challenged them to become even more responsible and involved citizens. For me this experience inspired a "can do" attitude that has informed both my non-paid and paid work over time. While it is stretching the goal of the "Changing the Paradigm" program a bit to suggest that its aim is to professionalize the volunteer experience, we all know volunteers who have been motivated by their experiences toward specific career paths. And, indeed, the payoff to our communities is certainly a more responsible and committed citizenry.

The openness to new ideas on the part of leadership (the governor in the example above) is the single most important ingredient involved in maximizing volunteer resources.

At both St. Joseph's Home for Children in Minneapolis and Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston under the leadership of Doug Goke and Steve Kauffman respectively, the commitment to volunteers comes from the top. While Pat Rowell, director of Volunteers at Massachusetts General Hospital, is described as a facilitator and broker of the volunteer process. She is supported by a committee that includes the chief executive officer of the hospital, the head of nursing, the head of social services and representatives of the hospital's five auxiliaries. According to Rowell, the committee has the clout to make many innovative things happen by utilizing volunteers to the best advantage for the hospital. The hospital is so successful at engaging volunteers that it attracts professional men and women from all over the area who contribute their talents and skills within the hospital setting.

I believe the organizations that are open and flexible to change and entrepreneurial in culture, are the most successful in engaging and utilizing volunteers. Tom Peters' *In Search of Excellence* suggests these simple tenets of effective management: Serve the customer; discourage conformity; reward excellence. As a highly motivated volunteer, I choose to give my time with the organizations that apply these principles to their volunteers as well as paid staff and those that encourage me to contribute as a partner in serving the customers and fulfilling the mission.

For us managers, then, the challenge is always to remember the feelings we have all had as volunteers and to understand what motivated and inspired us to join a particular organization. It is worth the investment of time to test those experiences against our own professional engagement of volunteer resources. Are we as leaders open and objective in our assessment of our own volunteer culture? Do we support the efforts of volunteers in our organizations? Do we take maximum advantage of the skills and knowledge of our volunteers? Do we have a wish list, as Winnie Brown suggests?

In our pursuit of total quality service here at The Points of Light Foundation, we have developed an internal self-directed team whose task is to assess the ways we engage our volunteers and to develop a vision for volunteer involvement within this organization. Our leadership is committed to the proposition that we must "walk the talk." This is an exciting process and one that should produce an excellent model. Meanwhile, a simple way to begin the paradigm shift is to ask the question, "Am I doing everything possible to encourage and engage volunteers effectively within my organization in pursuit of the mission? ■

Virginia Austin is The Points of Light Foundation's vice president of nonprofit outreach. She was inducted into The Oklahoma Hall of Fame by Governor Henry Bellmon in 1989 in recognition of her state and national contributions in community service.

Legislation

The National and Community Service Trust Act

By Richard C. Mock

President Bill Clinton signed into law the National and Community Service Trust Act at a White House ceremony on September 21. "I hope, believe and dream," the President said, "that national service will remain throughout the life of America not a series of promises, but a series of challenges, across all the generations and all walks of life to help us to rebuild our troubled but wonderful land.

"Beyond the concrete achievements of AmeriCorps, beyond the expanded educational opportunities those achievements will earn, national service, I hope and pray, will help us to strengthen the cords that bind us together as a people; will help us to remember in the quiet of every night that what each of us can become is to some extent determined by whether all of us can become what God meant us to be."

The national service initiative is designed to tackle the nation's problems by mobilizing Americans of every background, but particularly young people, in service to their communities and to the country. Extending support for service from elementary students to seniors, the initiative ranges from support for part-time volunteer service activities to full-time public service jobs that address unmet educational, environmental, human service or public safety needs.

The centerpiece of tbe effort, AmeriCorps, is a new program that offers educational awards to those who make a substantial commitment to service. Participants must be 17 or older (or at least 16 years of age in the case of youth corps participants) and must be high school graduates or agree to achieve their GED and may serve before, during or after post-secondary education.

Participants will be recruited and selected on a nondiscriminatory basis; however, a special emphasis will be placed on the needs of disadvantaged youth. Information about available positions will be widely disseminated through high schools, colleges and other placement offices.

Those in designated programs may serve a term of service full-time (1,700 hours) for one year or part-time (900 hours) over two years or three years in the case of students. An individual may serve up to two full-time terms, earning up to two full educational awards of $4,725 each which may be used to repay loans for higher education or to pay for higher education or training. These payments will be made directly to qualified post-secondary educational institutions or to the lending institution for those repaying college loans.

In addition, participants receive stipends set by the individual programs and based on the stipends received by VISTA volunteers but within guidelines set by the Corporation for National and Community Service. Federal funds will pay an amount equal to 85 percent of the VISTA stipend, with the balance to be borne by the local program.

All program participants without access to health insurance will receive health coverage; federal funds pay the first 85 percent, with the program assuming responsibility for the balance.

The Corporation for National and Community Service

The national service program will be administered by a new government Corporation for National and Community Service, created by combining the Commission on National and Community Service and ACTION, the federal domestic volunteer agency. The Corporation will be responsible for administration of all programs authorized under the National and Community Service Act and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act, including VISTA and the Older American Volunteer Programs.

The Corporation will have a 15-member bipartisan board of directors, which will be appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. The board will have responsibilities similar to those of a traditional

nonprofit board, such as review and approval of the Corporation's strategic plan, grantmaking decisions, regulations and policies, and evaluation plan. It also will review and advise the Corporation CEO on overall policies and advise the President on service.

James Joseph, president and CEO of the Council on Foundations (and vice chair of The Points of Light Foundation board of directors), has been nominated by the White House to be the board chairman.

Eli J. Segal, assistant to the President for national service and director of the Office of National Service, has been appointed by President Clinton and confirmed by the Senate to be the Corporation's president and CEO.

State Commissions

Each state will be required to establish a commission on national service or a comparable entity to be eligible to receive funds. The Corporation will provide funding to the state commissions based on a sliding scale and a matching basis declining from 85 percent the first year to no more than 50 percent in the fourth year. Funding in the first year will be at least $125,000 and at least $175,000 in subsequent years, with a cap of $750,000.

Each state commission will be governed by a bipartisan governor-appointed board of governors and will be responsible for the state's strategic plans, applications for funding, assistance in providing health and child care, statewide recruiting and information systems, grant administration, and developing project and training methods. The commissions may not administer Corporation-funded service programs.

State commissions submitting Corporation-approved plans for program support are eligible to receive one-third of the funds according to a population-based formula and one-third on a competitive basis.

Eligible Programs

Programs eligible for funding from state commissions include diverse community corps, youth corps, specialized service programs focusing on a specific community need, individual placement programs, campus-based service programs, programs to train service-learning coordinators in schools or in corps programs, intergenerational programs, national service entrepreneurship programs, professional corps, youthbuild programs, safe schools programs, programs for rural communities, programs to fight hunger, and current national service demonstration programs.

Programs may be run by nonprofit organizations, school districts or institutions of higher education, local governments and state and federal agencies. Funded programs cannot directly benefit for-profit businesses, labor unions or partisan political organizations or use program assistance for religious activities.

Programs will be selected based on quality, innovation, sustainability and replicability with the past experience of the proposed leadership taken into account. To assist communities of greatest need, the Corporation requires that 50 percent of assistance be directed to programs serving communities designated as economically disadvantaged, environmentally distressed, adversely affected by reductions in defense spending, and to programs in areas of high unemployment.

One-year program planning grants are also available. Selected programs can receive three-year renewable grants for program expansion or replication. Except for

President Clinton celebrates signing of national service legislation into law with service groups on White House lawn.

the planning grants, all programs must keep administrative costs at five percent or below. Programs are required to pay 15 percent of the individual stipend and health care benefits and 25 percent of other program costs, payments which can be actual cash payment or in-kind from any source other than programs funded under the National and Community Service or Domestic Volunteer Service Acts.

Serve-America

The legislation extends and expands the existing Serve-America program for school-age youth and Higher Education Innovative Projects for Community Service. State educational agencies have the responsibility to develop state-wide plans indicating programs to be funded and outlining a three-year strategy for service-learning. Agencies can provide funding, partly based on formula and partly through competition, to school-based programs which may be done in cooperation with community-based organizations. Local programs are required to pay a percentage of the costs, escalating from 10 percent in the first year to 50 percent in the fourth.

National nonprofit organizations with local chapters and community-based organizations are also eligible for funding for programs to involve school-age youth in community service. In addition, higher education institutions are eligible for grants for student community-service programs or programs to train teachers in service-learning methods.

Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973

The legislation also extends and expands the VISTA and Older American Volunteer Programs. These programs, currently under the ACTION agency, will eventually be administered by the Corporation. Changes in the VISTA program include an increase in the number of VISTA volunteers and establishment of University Year for VISTA, which will encourage student volunteer efforts addressing the needs of low-income communities.

It provides broadened authority under the Special Volunteer Programs section of the existing legislation to support demonstrations and innovations, to provide technical assistance and promote other entrepreneurial activities and eliminates specific authority for existing student community service and drug programs which are now covered under the new act.

Changes in the senior programs include renaming the Older American Volunteer Program as the National Senior Volunteer Corps and the Retired Senior Volunteer Program as the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). It also lowers the eligibility age for the RSVP program to 55, clarifies that Foster Grandparents may work with children with special and exceptional needs in Head Start programs, schools and day care centers, and increases the stipend for low-income Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions once over the next five years to account for inflation.

The legislation encourages relationships between ACTION programs and other federal agencies where ACTION volunteers might help further the programs of those agencies and restores the crediting of VISTA service credit for federal pensions. ■

Richard Mock is The Points of Light Foundation's director of recognition.

News & Commentary

Volunteer Administration Profession Gaining Respect

Once considered a job for "nice people helping others do good," volunteer administration is gaining respect as a profession, says the Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA).

By the fall of 1992, 56 educational institutions were offering coursework in working with volunteers; 20 percent offer advanced degrees or certificates in the subject.

The need for professionally trained staff—paid or unpaid—to work with volunteers has increased as community concerns have become more complex and time outside of work and family responsibilities has shrunk. Volunteers need support from individuals skilled in providing encouragement, leadership development, evaluation and recognition. Without that support, volunteers burn out or find other activities to occupy their limited free time.

☐ Information: AVA, P.O. Box 4584, Boulder CO 80306, (302) 541-0238.

Good from Good

Gregory B. Markus, Ph.D., a researcher at the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research, randomly divided a college class into two groups and assigned each different duties: performing community service—such as helping out at a homeless shelter or a women's crisis center—and doing library research. All students attended the same lectures and had the same amount of classwork and homework. But those who'd volunteered got significantly higher grades than those who didn't. ■

Generations United Receives CNCS Grant

The Commission on National and Community Service has given Generations United (GU) a grant to identify and highlight opportunities for intergenerational community service.

The one-year grant will enable GU to produce a technical assistance resource guide, a database of intergenerational community service programs and a list of specialists throughout the country who can assist current and potential program developers with planning, implementation and maintenance issues of community service programs.

GU has identified two program models for the project. In one, young and older participants work side-by-side to serve others in the community through such activities as teamwork in a homeless shelter or in an environmental awareness project. The other model has young and older participants serving each other in a planned and reciprocal manner, through such activities as older adults tutoring younger persons who, in turn, do chores for their older tutors.

Project goals include providing information, ideas, technical resources and networking opportunities to program operators; promoting partnerships among specialists in the youth service and aging networks; and building capacity for future intergenerational community service initiatives.

Claire Martin, director of special groups development for The Points of Light Foundation, serves on the project's Advisory Committee, which provides consultation for the project.

☐ Information: Angela Roberts, Project Coordinator, Generations United, c/o CWLA, 440 First Street, N.W., Suite 310, Washington DC 20001-2085; (202) 638-2952. ■

Older Volunteers: Trends

By Susan M. Chambre, Ph.D.

One of the most important trends in volunteering over the past 30 years has been the expanded participation of older persons.

In 1965, one in 10 people over the age of 65 reported that they had done some type of volunteer work during the previous year. Since then, surveys have monitored levels of participation on a regular basis, and by 1992, 42 percent of people between 65 and 74 were volunteering. Many older people now continue to volunteer well into their 70s, and 27 percent of people past 75 volunteered in 1992.

This change has several sources. One has been the impact of programs that recruit, place and reinforce older people's involvement. When these programs began in the mid-1960s, some observers wondered whether they would succeed. Serious objections were raised about whether older people were interested, whether their health was too fragile, whether organizations would actually engage them. On the other hand, it was at this time that the Red Cross abandoned its long-standing age limit of 65 for volunteers.

Between then and now, there have been striking shifts in our understanding of older persons and the process of aging. People live longer. They have fewer children and longer periods of retirement than did previous generations. Today's older people are keenly interested in keeping active; for some this involves travel and sports, while for others it involves working for pay or without pay as a volunteer.

Newspaper and magazine articles extol the virtues of volunteering. In articles like "Three Cheers for Older Heroes," "It's Time To Serve Our Country," "Giving Time," "Sharing Knowledge" and "A Legend in Her Own Town," readers are presented with positive views of what their community work can mean for others and for themselves.

Changes in the nature of the older population also account for their higher level of involvement and the weaker link between volunteering and age. Today's older population is better educated, more often native-born and relatively more affluent than past generations. These factors, especially the educational one, contribute to higher levels of participation.

Over the past 30 years, the gap between the educational achievements of the old and the young has virtually disappeared. A person's level of education has a strong influence on whether he or she is involved in volunteer work. Data from a 1991 National Council on Aging survey revealed that few people with eight or fewer years of school volunteered (9 percent) as compared to 17 percent of those with some high school, 25 percent of high school graduates, 38 percent of those with some college and close to half (47 percent) of college graduates. More recent figures have found that 38 percent of high school graduates and 66 percent of college graduates volunteer.

Today's older population includes the first generation of elders who has reached maturity in a society with mass higher education. Many are men who attended college on the G.I. Bill after World War II. Their educational profile explains why older people are attracted to different communal, educational and leisure activities—from playing tennis to vacationing at Elderhostels and attending college—than were past generations.

Cultural and population changes have increased the supply of elders who are interested in volunteer work and generated a demand for their services. Starting in the mid-1960s, a substantial decrease took place in the number of women who were full-time homemakers; a shortage in the supply of daytime volunteers was foreseen. It was found that retired persons could step in; several initiatives designed to expand community services by older persons came into being, expanding volunteer opportunities for this population level.

Today, older volunteers provide social and emotional support to recovering child abusers, abused or neglected children, patients in mental hospitals, retarded children and adults, families with chronically ill or retarded members, and boarder babies, including those with AIDS.

They work in many different settings—daycare centers, schools, prisons, hospitals. Recent new roles include consulting with small business owners, mentoring young people, joining VISTA and the Peace Corps, providing services to other long-living people in their own communities or in nursing homes, parent education, health education for other elders, working as auxiliary police, doing income tax returns, working as consumer advocates and engaging in lobbying and voter registration.

These efforts have expanded the supply of older

volunteers by making volunteering attractive, by actively recruiting people and helping them find appropriate volunteer jobs, and in some programs like RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) and Foster Grandparents, reducing economic barriers by providing stipends, carfare or a free lunch.

Actual participation and interest both have increased. In 1974, only one in 10 older people who were not volunteering said they were interested in becoming involved; more recently, surveys have found 25 percent and 37 percent interested.

Several programs for older volunteers were begun by the federal government during the 1960s. The first was the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), started in 1964 by the Small Business Administration. Its 13,000 members provide volunteer management expertise to prospective or current small business owners.

Three other federally sponsored programs merged into ACTION when it was formed in 1971. The Foster Grandparent program began in 1965 as an anti-poverty effort to provide community services employment and an income supplement to low-income elders. In 1990, 27,000 Foster Grandparents, 89 percent of them women, were providing social and emotional support to children with "special or exceptional needs," including autistic and physically handicapped, abused and neglected children, teenage parents and adolescents with substance abuse problems.

Currently the largest single program with about 410,000 participants, the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), renamed the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program in the recently passed National and Community Service Trust Act) was established in 1969. RSVP recruits volunteers, often through other organizations, who are screened and placed in RSVP-sponsored programs or other organizations. Its original premise was that older people would benefit from volunteering as part of a group. The approach has been modified, with RSVP volunteers now working alongside people of all ages, but the idea has been retained in identity as an "RSVP volunteer" that unites people working in scattered locations.

A third federally sponsored program, the stipended Senior Companion program established in 1974, engages 10,000 volunteers in visiting frail elderly in their homes and providing social support.

The federal government's role in starting and funding programs has diminished in recent years, and public-private partnerships and private sector initiatives have become more prominent in the development of new programs for older volunteers. Intergenerational service programs and the engagement of senior volunteers in helping other elderly such as The Points of Light Foundation's Seniors in Service to Seniors (SISS), now being piloted at several location nationwide, have taken on increasing significance.

From 16 programs for older volunteers in the U.S. in the mid-1960s, the number of community-based efforts has become too large to count. One of the earliest nongovernment programs was the Shepherd's Center in Kansas City, in which a coalition of 22 churches in 1972 created a network of programs in which elders were both clients and collaborators.

In 1984, the National Council on the Aging piloted the Family Friends program in which older volunteers provide social support to a family with a mentally ill member or a retarded child. Initially funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the eight national demonstration sites are being expanded to 14 with federal Administration on Aging funding.

More recently, a collaboration of six foundations created the Linking Lifetimes program, which includes intergenerational efforts such as telephone reassurance between elders and latchkey children and between nursing home residents and the developmentally disabled.

Perhaps the largest private sector initiative—involving close to 400,000 people, or 8 percent of older volunteers—is that of the American Association of Retired Persons. AARP has begun or cosponsored programs like the Widowed Person's Service (started in 1973) and the Volunteers in Tax Assistance (VITA) program. A nationwide talent bank matches volunteers and jobs. Regular articles about volunteering in AARP's widely read publications, *Modern Maturity* and *50 Plus*, have played an important role in shaping people's perceptions about community service.

The National Executive Service Corps, founded in 1977, places professionals and business executives. It provides consulting services to nonprofit organizations in 22 states; there were 148 consultation projects in New York City alone in 1990. The Corps' Science/Math Enrichment program in Baltimore city schools is designed to motivate students and expand their understanding of how math and science are used in the work world.

The National Retiree Volunteer Center, established in 1986, offers technical assistance to corporations interested in establishing programs for retired employees. The Honeywell Corporation, for example, sponsors the New Vista School for teenage mothers which is partly staffed by Honeywell retirees. By early 1991, the National Retiree Volunteer Center had helped launch projects in 44 corporations.

While many new programs are age-segregated and designed to help elders find new social roles when they retire or their family obligations diminish, studies of the volunteer patterns of elders suggest that these features oversimplify the diverse paths to volunteer interest and activity among older persons.

In 1988, very few older volunteers in the U.S. were in ACTION or the AARP-sponsored programs, while in Calgary, Alberta, only 38 percent of older volunteers reported "working in connection with other seniors." As in all age groups, the largest concentrations of elders (57 percent) are in churches and synagogues. Some organizations rely heavily on older volunteers without necessarily designing programs for their participation. More than half of Red Cross volunteers, for example, are over the age of 55, and many of them have been involved in the organization over a substantial part of their lives.

A second feature of programs for older volunteers is an assumption that retirement, widowhood or reduced parenting responsibilities activates elders to become involved or to expand their participation. Pamphlets and other publications describe community service as a "work substitute." There appears to be something to this. Continuing in one's trade as a volunteer allows one to work part-time without rigid work scheduling and financial dependence.

But many older volunteers also are continuing previous patterns of community service. In Calgary, 45 percent reported being involved in volunteer work "throughout their lives" while only 21 percent said they began to serve after they retired. Volunteer program retention appears far greater for people who have volunteered in the past.

Role loss at retirement does not necessarily foster volunteerism. Having free time, seeking companionship or wanting to reduce one's sense of loneliness motivates a minority of elders. Indeed, elders have a higher tendency to volunteer if they are married and if they are working. Many older people successfully combine paid and unpaid work, especially if they work part-time. Fifty-eight percent of working and 42 percent of retired elders volunteered in 1990.

Why are people who have left the paid labor force less often involved in volunteer work? One possibility that has not been examined by researchers is that some people might be unwilling to work without payment. For some, retirement was a welcome relief from an unrewarding job. A small number believe they have "paid their dues" to society. Retirees do not appear to reallocate the time they spent working to social or communal activities; much of it goes, instead, to solitary and passive pursuits like watching television—especially among men. The tendency to join and participate in voluntary associations does not appear to change much over a person's life.

In addition to the assumption that retirement will motivate elders to begin to volunteer, fictive kinship relationships with children, adolescents and adults are often set up as inducements to older persons to volunteer. These roles may be personally enriching, but they do not present many opportunities to link elders with volunteer roles that benefit members of their immediate community or families.

Few elders (5 percent) volunteer to ensure "the continuation of activities or institutions I or my family benefit from." Elders also report that they are less often asked to volunteer: 37 percent of people over 65 indicated that they were involved in their current volunteer activities because someone asked them (the comparable figure for volunteers of all age groups is 41 percent).

Although there are more volunteer opportunities for older persons today than in the past, there are not enough ways they can be involved in the same way as younger people—i.e., asked to volunteer by organizations that benefit them, their families or their friends.

While participation is higher among elders with histories of community involvement, it is possible to attract new elder volunteers: close to half of a sample of people in the Family Friends program were new to volunteering. Recruitment of retirees, in particular, is a cost-effective strategy because they devote more time than other groups when they are involved. One recent study found that 69 percent of retirees, 55 percent of people who were employed and 54 percent of those describing themselves as homemakers devoted 10 or more hours a month to volunteer work.

Retirees and previously uninvolved volunteers may be attracted by different types of roles. Some may be interested in community service that is defined as a "leisure alternative"; not a way to "work" or be a "grandparent," but a change from playing golf or watching television. Defined in this way, some elders might be attracted by a chance to engage in a contributory form of leisure.

Schools and youth organizations could involve older people by recruiting grandparents and greatgrandparents just as they involve parents. They are especially needed because far fewer parents are available during daytime hours than in the past. It is realistic to recruit grandparents, since most live close by and regularly visit their grandchildren. This strategy has another consequence. Grandparenthood and greatgrandparenthood are meaningful but sometimes ambiguous social roles. Involvement with organizations serving their offspring might strengthen their relationships with their grandchildren by providing a context for shared experiences.

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Compassionate Solutions at Work

Meeting America's Housing Needs

The American religious community has long been identified with addressing the problems that affect our communities. Congregations have served as advocates for the poor, the disadvantaged and disenfranchised, developing efforts to meet their specific needs while working to tackle the underlying causes of their problems.

Two volunteer intensive programs that are experiencing rapid growth—Habitat for Humanity International and National Interfaith Hospitality Networks—are outstanding examples of programs developed by religious congregations to meet a specific community problem—short-term emergency and long-term affordable housing.

National Interfaith Hospitality Networks (NIHN)

By Val Davia and Andree Eisenberg

National Interfaith Hospitality Networks (NIHN), founded in 1988, is the parent organization of 30 local networks that provide comprehensive services to homeless families. The local networks consist of churches and synagogues through which some 28,000 volunteers work cooperatively to provide families with safe and comfortable overnight accommodations, meals and other assistance. A local network director works in conjunction with the volunteers and local social service agencies to provide services that help homeless families reestablish their independence. Interfaith Hospitality networks operate in Connecticut, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Texas; networks are developing in California, Indiana, Kentucky, North Carolina, New York, Washington and Wisconsin.

NIHN's goals are two-fold: to provide meals, shelter, housing and job placement support to homeless families, and to increase the number of local citizens volunteering to provide direct service and advocacy on behalf of homeless families.

The first Interfaith Hospitality Network was created in Union County, New Jersey, in 1986 when a group of 11 churches and synagogues joined together to provide shelter, meals and support services to homeless families. The effort proved so successful that soon other congregations wanted to replicate the program. By 1988, NIHN was organized to assist other congregations and communities and to promote the program in other parts of the country where the need is great.

In a local network, eight to 12 congregations join together to serve as "host congregations" for homeless families (or "guests") on a rotating basis. Using a gymnasium, meeting space or religious education classrooms, a host church or synagogue provides overnight accommodations and meals for three to five families for one week every two to three months. Additional congregations support the program by providing volunteers and/or contributions of needed supplies. Social service agencies refer families to the network and provide day facilities. A network director oversees the program and supplies case management for network guests.

Since its founding, NIHN and the local networks have garnered national and international recognition for their leadership in promoting volunteerism and providing effective assistance to homeless families. In 1992, President George Bush awarded NIHN one of 21 annual Points of Light Awards (now the President's Volunteer Action Awards) chosen from a field of at least 4,500 nominees.

Volunteers: Heart of the Network

The real story behind and within the local networks is about the volunteers who organize and operate them. Volunteers transform their places of worship into temporary homes for their homeless "guests," providing basic human needs—shelter, safety and sustenance—with a spirit of warmth and hospitality. Volunteers set up sleeping accommodations in religious education classrooms or meeting rooms, cook nutritious meals, play with children and assist with schoolwork, and offer compassionate support to parents faced with the stress and insecurity of homelessness.

As a result of their firsthand experience with homeless families, many volunteers go well beyond their initial commitments to the program and typically help their guests find housing and jobs, furnish apartments, provide recreational opportunities for children, and assist with security or utility deposits.

Volunteers have developed special programs to assist guests with all kinds of needs, such as parenting,

NIHN volunteers provide comprehensive services to homeless families.

budgeting, GED preparation and independent living skills. They also have renovated buildings for both transitional and permanent housing. And because of their one-to-one involvement and greater understanding of the root causes of homelessness, they have become active supporters of public policy measures that increase the stock of affordable housing. This personal commitment is the vital factor in the 70 percent success rate achieved by network guests in securing permanent homes.

Typical of IHN volunteers are the following:

■ **Lisa Mugridge,** a working mother who manages a computer company in the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, area. She serves as the coordinator of her church in the IHN program and as secretary of the local network board of trustees. But her commitment to the homeless women in the program goes well beyond these activities. She personally trains them in keyboard skills, computer terminology and the latest versions of popular software programs, so that they are well equipped to find a good paying job.

"Really mentoring someone through the job preparation and search process makes the difference," she says. "The women I work with need confidence more than anything, and the personalized attention gives them the confidence to achieve their goals."

■ **Michael Mattson** is the coordinator at the Church of St. William in Fridley, Minnesota, and a self-proclaimed "volunteer addict" for the local network and other causes. Mattson got involved with the network after seeing a family look for food in a dumpster.

"In this country, no one should have to dig through the trash to eat," he says. "This is ridiculous and it's going to stay ridiculous unless we all do something." Struck with diabetes at age 35, Mattson has lost both legs below the knee and much of his eyesight and has survived a kidney transplant.

■ **Richard and Victoria McNeal** are the parents of four children who wound up homeless after McNeal lost his job as a heavy equipment operator. They were guests of the Dayton, Ohio, network for a number of weeks until securing a home of their own again. Now, McNeal drives the van for the Dayton network, coordinates furniture donations and spends time with the families in the program.

"The kids are so hungry for love and attention, it overwhelms you," he says. "It makes me think of my own family and the struggles we went through and just makes

you want to do more. It doesn't matter how anyone got to be homeless; the question is, how can we get them off the street and into decent housing?"

■ "The network in Dayton began in April 1990, and **Esther Burg** was in on all the action," according to Lynne Butler, board president. Burg has helped with all aspects of hosting in her congregation of Zion Lutheran. But she is also very involved with the guests after they leave the local network.

Best known as the "furniture lady," Burg keeps lists of each guest family's needs and sets out to find everything. She helps with moving, cleaning and driving people to appointments, to schools for registration, to laundromats and to job interviews. She even remembers birthdays.

■ **Kim Delatour** is the mother of three young children. She has been a local network coordinator since the IHN program started in Union County, N.J., in 1986. Her pastor describes her as "the conscience of the congregation, always keeping our feet to the fire."

Delatour organizes all aspects of host week and helps the families with many personal needs. As a result of their involvement in the network, her church's volunteers have founded a nonprofit corporation called Faith Builders, Inc., which works with other organizations to build and rehab homes for low-income families. Construction on their first project of 12 new units was expected to begin this fall.

■ **Pam Meyers** and her three children are former guests of a local network. After Pam found housing and got employment as a home health care aide, she began volunteering in the network.

"Pam is very effective in helping our guests because she has been in their shoes," says Ellen Amos, network coordinator of the church where Meyers volunteers.

Challenges of Social Change

By far the greatest barrier to developing new local networks is the stereotype many people have of homeless people. Congregational leaders often dismiss the network idea because of their own fear of the homeless or the perception that their congregations will not accept homeless people in their midst, even though there may be many individuals who are eager to help.

Because of these fears and misconceptions, much of National Interfaith Hospitality Networks' activity involves efforts to shatter stereotypes and challenge individuals to become involved. Nothing reaches people more effectively than well told, true stories of local network volunteers and guests who have transcended their differences to touch one another's lives in meaningful ways. Many IHN volunteers, as an outgrowth of their commitment to homeless families, travel to neighboring communities to share their experiences.

Through the Interfaith Hospitality Network, communities are learning that homelessness refers not to a somehow diseased population, but to a tragic, though fixable, situation. ■

Val Davia is the editor of Hospitality, *NIHN's quarterly newsletter. She has served as a writer and consultant for local network development and volunteer training resources.*

Andree Eisenberg is the program assistant and advocacy coordinator at NIHN headquarters in Summit, New Jersey.

Habitat for Humanity

By Jenn Weier

Volunteers *are* the backbone of Habitat for Humanity. Millard Fuller, founder and president of the international housing organization, says, "Without all of the wonderful, giving volunteers that work with Habitat, our mission would be just a dream. Each and every day, Habitat volunteers are building houses and putting their love into action."

Habitat for Humanity International, a nonprofit organization developed as a Christian effort but now ecumenical in scope, is dedicated to eliminating substandard housing from the world. Habitat works in partnership with people in need, building simple, decent houses that are sold at no profit, through no-interest mortgages issued over a fixed period. Costs of homes differ relative to location, labor, land and materials. The average cost of a Habitat house in the United States is $35,000, while houses in developing countries range from $500-$3,000. Small monthly mortgage payments, including taxes and insurance, are repaid over seven to 20 years and deposited into a revolving "Fund for Humanity," which supports the construction of more houses.

More than 25,000 Habitat homes have been constructed in 40 countries since Habitat's founding in 1976. Dedicated volunteers work daily at the more than 1,200 Habitat projects worldwide. Saturday construction work days are common at affiliated projects to allow those who are unable to volunteer during the week to roll up their sleeves and learn to build a house.

As well as engaging volunteers in "the field," there are more than 100 volunteers at the organization's international headquarters in Americus, Georgia. These volunteers are provided with housing and a $40 weekly stipend. There are office positions available in addition to a need for construction volunteers. A knowledge of construction is not a prerequisite to volunteering with Habitat. The goal is to utilize each individual's skills and to challenge them to learn and explore all options that working with Habitat can provide.

Habitat for Humanity has projects in 34 developing countries worldwide. Volunteers, called International Partners, travel to these projects with the goal of teaching local people about Habitat for Humanity and preparing them to assume management responsibilities of the project. In addition to building houses, International Partners spend three years developing community education programs and culturally appropriate systems of construction. They also assist in project management and family selection.

Habitat volunteers are a very diverse group of people, representing many ethnic, social and religious backgrounds. They include recent college graduates, retirees and even CEOs of corporations. What they all have in common is a dedication to housing issues and a desire to make a difference for those who are living in

Habitat volunteers in Charlotte, N.C.

. . . in Columbus, Ohio.

. . . in Salisbury, Md.

inadequate housing conditions. For some Habitat supporters, this dedication is demonstrated through a day spent at work on a Habitat site and for others it means a full-time commitment. Either way, this commitment is often long lasting.

Typical of those who have committed their lives full-time to Habitat are Fiona and Nevil Eastwood. After learning about Habitat for Humanity, the couple took a chance and put their lives on hold to come to the U.S. and join the international organization in its mission to provide decent housing for those in need. The New Zealand natives arrived in Americus, Georgia, in June 1992 to begin a one-year volunteer term at the organization's international headquarters.

Fiona pointed out that working with Habitat has made them realize how tremendous the housing needs are in the U.S. "There definitely is a need for housing in New Zealand, but everything is on a larger scale in the U.S.," she said. An affiliate project was established in Auckland, New Zealand, after the Eastwoods arrived in the U.S. It had been their original goal to learn about Habitat and "take" it back with them.

The couple has been stricken with what is jokingly referred to as "infectious Habititis." They have extended their visas and plan to volunteer with Habitat indefinitely.

"Habitat has become a career for us," Fiona said. "I don't think there's any way that we will ever not be involved," she added. "I have never before felt the sense of satisfaction that I get from volunteering with Habitat."

The Eastwoods had been living in Auckland, where Nevil had his own construction business and Fiona was working as an assistant accountant at a building supply company. The couple's friends thought their idea of volunteering with Habitat was "crazy." However, Nevil had always wanted to use his talent for building to help others and found that Habitat provided the extension of faith and commitment for which he and Fiona had been searching.

"Habitat volunteers receive much more than they can ever give," Nevil said. "You share the real satisfaction of seeing someone's dream come true, and know you have helped them help themselves to a chance at a better way of life. There is no greater reward than that."

At Habitat's headquarters, Fiona volunteered in the Human Resources department and Nevil worked as a construction supervisor. Following Hurricane Andrew, the couple ventured to South Florida where they currently are volunteers with the Greater Miami Habitat for Humanity affiliate, which is building in areas devastated by Hurricane Andrew in 1992. Fiona serves as the corporate partnership coordinator, while Nevil continues to use his construction expertise teaching other volunteers to build homes.

From this couple's perspective, what they have given up is insignificant compared to what they have gained through their volunteer experience. "We never see working with Habitat as a sacrifice," Fiona said. "We have gained so much through the friendships we have formed and the people we have met."

The Eastwoods are just two of hundreds of thousands of caring, dedicated Habitat people who volunteer with Habitat each year. With their help, Habitat for Humanity continues to build homes throughout the world.

There are many ways to become involved with Habitat for Humanity. For more information on how to volunteer, phone 1-800-HABITAT (422-4828). ■

Jenn Weier is media relations coordinator for Habitat for Humanity International.

To Russia With Love Through Volunteering

By Dr. Margaret McLaughlin

Moscow in another era.

Under the communist regime, "subbotnick," the Russian word for "volunteering," came to have a questionable connotation. For 70 years, it meant forced labor, and its use today still conveys distrust in the minds of Moscovites. But now more than ever, Russians need to help each other and, against many odds, they do.

In late October, I spent a week meeting with representatives of the Moscow Charity House (MCH), a private voluntary agency run by Moscovites who literally are changing the attitude Russians have toward volunteering. Within the past six months, the 16 "paid" MCH staff (salaries range from $20 to $200 a month) and more than 2,000 volunteers provided services to at least 70,000 of Moscow's neediest. That's more than 10,000 individuals a month!

Their services emanate from MCH's six program areas: an information and referral center, a food and clothing distribution warehouse, a transportation program for the disabled, a meals on wheels program for the elderly, an "urgent practical aid" program, and a technical assistance and media resource center for the 45 neighborhood agencies which comprise MCH's affiliate family.

In a city of 9 million people, Moscow has more than 300,000 pensioners (women over 55 and men over 60) who receive only one-half of the amount necessary to live at a subsistence level. An equal number of disabled can't get from their homes to the lines in front of the numerous and, unfortunately, widespread "specialty food" stores that can provide for their daily needs.

Inflation is rising, unemployment is rising, and frustration at the slow pace of the transition to democracy is on the rise, too. All this, combined with the aborted October coup, does not make most citizens comfortable with the stability of democracy—nor with their future. In short, life for the average citizen in Moscow—as in many other Russian cities—is precarious.

Let me share some of my impressions of the difficult life people lead in Moscow as well as impressions of some citizens who diligently are taking on leadership roles to tackle those difficulties responsibly. These impressions blend both emotional and factual descriptions of their work, for it is almost impossible to separate the two in conversations with Moscovites. Russians even have a term for this phenomenon which characterizes the soul as "dusha" and is present in almost all written or verbal communication.

Let's start with the difficulties first. Imagine you are a pensioner who lives solely on a government subsidy of 4,600 rubles a week. (At $1.00 equal to 1,200 rubles, that's about $3.83 a week.) In buying your weekly food supply, you plan for 3 liters (1.06 quarts equals a liter) of milk at 215 rubles each, 1 kilo (2.2 lbs.) of meat at 2,000 rubles, and one-half kilo of cheese at 3,000 rubles a kilo. You already have spent 3,715 rubles—about $3.00. Rent is 150 rubles a week; electricity is 75. All you need to add is 1.5 kilos of apples at 1,000 per kilo, and you've used up all of your weekly pension. What American gerontologist would

say that a weekly diet of only meat, cheese, milk and apples is healthy?

Life is even harder if you are one of the 300,000 disabled. First, your access to transportation adapted for the disabled is almost non-existent as are the funds to provide it. Regular bus, tram or trolley transportation for your 9 million fellow citizens is rapidly deteriorating; only 10 new vehicles replaced the old in 1991. One 12-mile taxi ride in early 1993 cost about one-third of your average *monthly* government subsidy—approximately 7,000 rubles or $6.00. The sad choice for you and many disabled is whether you go to the doctor or get your groceries.

Finally, in this sad description of life in Moscow are the children. While I did not visit sites for orphans or other children in need, a Muscovite involved in the UNESCO Women's Association told me that many children who lived near the Chernobyl nuclear power plant after its accident in the late 1980s are being diagnosed with cancer. Inadequate medical equipment and insufficient medications are forcing local Moscow hospitals and children's organizations to seek international financial assistance to fly children out of the country for treatment.

And cancer is only a part of the remnants of the communist regime affecting children today. Schools lack textbooks with non-communist propaganda and teachers lack the pedagogical skills to encourage the creative thinking children need to become free yet responsible citizens in their society. More basic to their mental and physical development is the lack of healthful foods such as fruits and vegetables in a daily diet.

But as with every crisis, with every challenge, with every hardship, there are people who rise from the ashes like phoenixes to recreate their own lives and those of others—to help their families, neighbors, communities and their country at large. There are more than several of these phoenixes at the Moscow Charity House (MCH). Let me introduce you to two—Galina Bodrenkova, MCH president, and Andrew Verbitsky, vice-president. Like many Russians today, they hold several jobs, or should I say "positions," since most of their work is done without compensation.

As president of Moscow Charity House, Galina manages the major tasks of running a 16-person office which reaches out to 45 affiliate neighborhood agencies. Trained as a media specialist under the communist regime, Galina is taking her information-gathering skills and applying them to fundraising and managing the many tentacled outreach programs of MCH. Meanwhile, she is running for Parliament, having just served on the Moscow City Council.

A day with Galina is like watching a Charlie Chaplin flick at the quick action pace of the old-time screen that is twice the normal speed. Entering the former communist headquarters building which now houses MCH (as well as the Carnegie Endowment for Peace) takes one back immediately to the communist era. A guard stops you at the main desk, but this time it's a pensioner not a soldier. Galina signs in, takes the office key, and gets a begrudging nod from this "gate-keeper."

Some things never change. Because of the sound of the single elevator and its noticeable absence at the first floor, climbing the stairs seems the more appropriate method of reaching the third floor. The walk is effective in raising the body temperature enough to keep at least five

Russian parents in Moscow serve as volunteer teachers in an alternative school called The Vulcan Club they formed for their children in grades K-8 (top photo). The public school system provides one teacher. The volunteers encourage creativity as exhibited in the dance performance for visitors and parents in bottom photo.

minutes of heat within oneself before feeling the effect of a 20 degree exterior temperature and an interior one of merely twice that. The MCH office is cold, and it's only October!

But one doesn't have time to consider one's own comfort needs; the phone begins to ring off the hook and doesn't stop for more than five minutes throughout the rest of the day. Galina's conversations range from contacts with the representatives of the 45 neighborhood agencies to the mayor's office. On some days (although not while I was there), there are calls from the 40 international organizations that have supported Galina and Andrew in their efforts since 1991. Galina's media background has served her well in the public relations department.

Between phone calls, Galina, three of her "staff" (Rosa and Katrina who are volunteers, and Lena), and I discuss the work The Points of Light Foundation will be performing in April as part of a larger "Paratransit" project. Managed by Access Exchange International, a U.S.-based nonprofit advocacy and technical assistance organization for the handicapped, this project is funded by the United States Agency for International

Development (USAID), the State Department's development assistance arm. The Foundation will conduct a volunteer management workshop with leaders of the 45 affiliate agencies who deal with the disabled.

While the five of us blow on our hands to keep warm, the discussion ranges from how volunteers are defined to what their needs are. It's difficult to travel over the diverse definitions of volunteering during the 70 years from pre-revolutionary Russia when volunteering was a common activity within the wealthy class to the Stalinist era of the 1930s when volunteers turned in their relatives to the police for talking to foreigners. Today, our discussion still leaves the concept and operations of volunteering at the development stage. Other organizations, particularly the United Way International Liaison Office, which also has received a USAID grant for a volunteer development project, are making headway in assisting Russian citizens in formulating their own definition of this term and its subsequent activities; but it's difficult to change seven decades of attitudes. Hopefully, the Foundation training in April will contribute to change.

We next visit the information referral center down the hall from Galina's office, which is serviced by four paid staff members. Three of the eight telephones are being used by Tanya, Lena and Olga assigned to "call-ins" from people in need or from their relatives, friends or neighborhood agency representatives to know where to go for food, clothing, medical, legal and other assistance. There is no Moscow phone directory (as I sadly found out on my first naive day) and so this little center provides as much information as the Washington, D.C. yellow pages do under the heading: "social services." More than 280 social service organizations were analyzed by MCH staff and just over 50 were listed in a tiny eight-page pamphlet (lime green) for public use. Due to a lack of funds, however, the first printing ran out, and MCH is now seeking assistance to update and publish a second copy.

Later in the day, as the dark of mid-afternoon creeps in, we visit the warehouse full of food stuff and clothing contributed by international organizations or individuals. Sadly, the only labels on cans I see are "Slim Fast," which makes me feel more sad than angry at the irony of it all. Here is where Ludmilla and two other MCH volunteers slept overnight on October 3 and 4 to protect the warehouse supplies from being stolen during the potential coup. How they could sleep, I don't know, for they reported—with laughs—that gun shots inhibited their dozing.

We move on to meet with MCH Vice-president Andrew Verbitsky, a young activist during the 1989 revolution, who founded an organization called Empathy. Together, the two organizations provide technical assistance to the more than 45 nonprofit organizations functioning in the Moscow area. Entering Andrew's office is like coming home at the end of the day, since it is located in an apartment on the ground floor of a massive residential complex left over from the communist era. Using living quarters as offices is a common remedy for the lack of space but discouraged by both tenants and government housing officials.

Ten voluntary staff members of Empathy and friends are around an office table (desks are almost unheard of in the charity sector due to their expense) sharing an evening meal, a common occurrence in Moscow to save on time and expenses wasted during individualized shopping trips to the local kiosks or hidden sources of scarce and coveted items.

Here the conversation turns to Empathy activities, which in the past six months have included the publication of two social service magazines distributed in more than 70 Russian cities, the development of a health awareness brochure on AIDS, and an education seminar for charity leaders sponsored by Great Britain's CARE.

The day ends with a reflection on just how these individuals—Galina, Tanya, Olga, Lena, Ludmilla and Andrew—and the representatives of more than 10,000 nonprofits in Russia—do what they do. How do they carry on with little if any payment to assist the elderly, disabled and children in their city? How do they fight the reputation they might have of being fronts for "mafioso" or former authoritarian "apparatchics"—which, unfortunately, has been the case for many nonprofit charities? How do they encourage individual citizens who barely have enough money for food to give their time and resources freely? How do they function without any final laws protecting their rights and responsibilities as nonprofits? How do they fund the exorbitant import taxes on equipment received from outside donors when their own internal resources are depleted?

Certainly, they do not believe in "subbotnik"; their labor of love is not forced. It comes from the heart and the soul, against incredible odds. These leaders of volunteers, these leaders in the social service sector, manifest that precious characteristic of volunteers around the world: the desire, ability and capability to care for each other despite concern for oneself. It is they who are taking a leadership role in bringing their country out of communism and into democracy. ■

Dr. Margaret McLaughlin assists in developing The Points of Light Foundation's International Outreach program. Her Moscow visit was one stop in a three-country trip to develop technical assistance projects in Poland and the Czech Republic as well as Russia.

Older Volunteers

(continued from page 18)

Many more elders live in suburban areas than in the past. This change suggests a growing need to arrange transportation for older volunteers, not just reimburse costs. A second strategy is to create at-home volunteer opportunities. This is currently done in the Linking Lifelines program, in which people offer social support and information by telephone.

In addition to the increase in older people volunteering, the volunteer labor force has increasingly become composed of people past the age of 65. It is important to understand why many of them do volunteer, and why some do not. In the future, we will need to continue to refine our efforts to support this large and important source of unpaid labor and to offer elders the opportunity to maintain or expand their social relationships, to apply job skills learned over the course of a lifetime, and contribute to their communities and their families. ■

Dr. Chambre is associate professor of sociology at Bernard M. Baruch College, New York City.

Round-Up

From Service Receivers to Service Givers

The Rutgers-Camden Literacy Acceleration Partnership in Camden, New Jersey, is a university-school district program designed to turn parents into classroom tutors and students into peer tutors, beginning with very young readers. Both activities—Parents as Tutors and Kids as Tutors—combine literary acceleration and tutor training. Both are based on the same simple premise: We learn best what we teach.

The program has evolved, with several last-minute funding rescues, from an urban literacy practicum that Rutgers University at Camden began to offer in 1990 with a federal grant and consultative help from the Camden Chapter of the Literacy Volunteers of America. The university kept the course alive after the grant expired, training more than 100 undergraduates as volunteer literacy tutors.

When the Camden School District stepped in to offer start-up funding and books to pilot the partnership at Cooper's Poynt School in North Camden, the program took on its present, four-phase form:

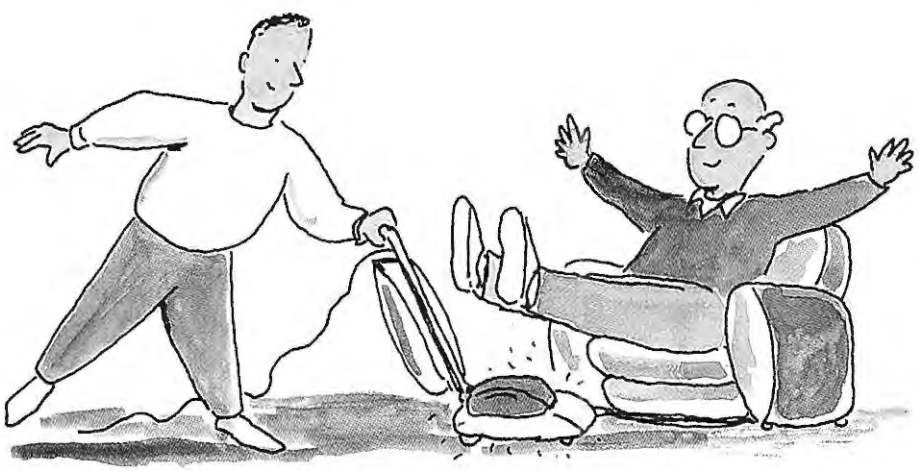
Phase 1, Kids as Tutors, is now in its second year at Cooper's Poynt School. Phase 2, Parents as Tutors, began in March 1993 and is in its first full year at Cooper's Poynt. Phase 3, Community Leadership, began in the current school year. It will train parent tutors to run the program with Rutgers staff and student support. Phase 4, Community Replication, the planned culmination of the university-school district partnership, will form a team of leadership parents and Rutgers staff to take the program to other schools, districts and communities.

The goal of the program's first phase is to develop low-level readers as peer tutors. This phase began at Cooper's Poynt School in a series of 10-week one-on-one learning partnerships. Rutgers undergraduates worked with 47 second and third graders in two remedial classrooms to turn entire classes of low-level readers into peer tutors. This year, a new group of Rutgers undergraduates is mentoring the same pupils, who are now third and fourth graders, as they tutor first and second graders one-on-one.

The program's second phase aims to develop parent tutors for Camden schools. The phase is designed as a 30-hour support group that will become a feeding system for school district remedial reading programs in need of parent tutors and classroom aides. It aims to create a professional-level group of Rutgers reading tutors for Camden schools. The activity combines pre-literacy and tutor training for any individual with excellent, average or limited proficiency in reading or English.

The goal of this phase is to improve reading or language use proficiency by one grade level for each 50 hours of class or less through learning to tutor a peer or child. A pre-literacy segment will build participants' self-confidence and comfort level in dealing with language and will begin orientation to teaching through basic instruction modules and a component that combines literacy acceleration and tutor training.

In the third phase, community leadership development, Rutgers undergraduates will continue to provide initial volunteer services for both children and new community participants while parents who have graduated from the program will be hired to take increasing ownership of



the program as master tutors and support group leaders. Eventually, in the program's fourth and final phase, paid parent leaders will play a prominent role in taking the training component, the support group, to other schools in the district and beyond.

The program's long-term goal is to develop a university/community team strong enough to replicate the program at the Rutgers campuses in Newark and New Brunswick, both in districts whose schools are composed predominantly of minority children. The program's basic thrust—to turn the community of need into the community of service—will continue to drive the program in any replication.

If applied-for federal continuation funding is received for the 1993-97 school years, the program will be expanded to other schools and social agencies in the greater Camden area, and the Cooper's Poynt School parents who already are involved will continue training to become paid professional parent support group leaders.

The program has potential for creating an entire generation of community volunteers who have learned the values and effectiveness of voluntary service from earliest school years.

☐ Information: Lucille T. Chagnon, Program Coordinator, (609) 225-6258. ■

Aides for the AIDS-Afflicted

The Foundation for Children with AIDS, which works out of an old hospital in Boston, Massachusetts' Roxbury neighborhood, offers a program of professionals working with the HIV-infected and two direct service programs in which volunteers have a central role. In Project Star, volunteers work with families affected by HIV, bringing various therapies to the children—all of them born to HIV-infected mothers (the children test positive to antibodies to the virus but are not necessarily infected themselves)—and giving support to the parents. In the Kinship Program, the mothers are recovering from substance abuse while their children receive the same therapies as in Project Star. All volunteers receive an intensive 15-20 hours of training that is conducted over four days of a single weekend.

The Foundation's volunteers also work in several direct service areas.

As teachers' assistants in Foundation classrooms, they work at least four hours a week on developing basic life skills in children ages three months to three years. They teach children from three months to a year-and-a-half the most fundamental of movement and interaction skills. In the toddler classroom, they teach the children motor skills and how to feed themselves. When the children are two-and-a-half, the volunteers are involved in standard preschool programs: reading to the children, helping them with music, encouraging them.

The reality of these classrooms is the effect of HIV on development: children with HIV start more slowly than normal children, but they catch up. Adult volunteers commit to stay with the program for a year; student volunteers commit to two semesters. The children become very attached to the volunteers who work with them and look forward to the days when they appear, according to Volunteer Coordinator Angela O'Callaghan,

Other Foundation volunteers work with case managers, handling necessary paperwork and finding resources such as food providers, housing and legal help. They help mothers find job training (95 percent of the Foundation's clients are female-headed, single-parent families).

A third group of volunteers works directly with families as "family buddies." This program, says O'Callaghan, "was in some ways the trickiest to get off the ground. Our families would say they didn't need anyone working with them. Much of this, we found, came from the fact that they already had so many agency contacts through health, welfare and so on that they just didn't want anyone more walking through their lives.

"What we did was recruit and train the 'family buddies' and then offer them. Families would say they didn't need one themselves, but they knew another family that maybe did need somebody."

The program is very small and moving forward slowly, and O'Callaghan doesn't want it to grow any faster because placement is so critical an element. One entry point for the program, organizers have discovered, has been the uninfected older siblings of children in the program. These children sometimes feel left out, and their mothers often worry about the close edge of trouble on which they run. As a result, Foundation volunteers have developed a Big Sister/Big Brother relationship with some of these older children who thereby find acceptance.

The "Buddies" are weekend day visitors and often arrive in pairs, by car, as a security measure in neighborhoods that have high crime incidence. But their greatest protection has turned out to be not the "street smarts" they are taught, but the families they serve or neighbors of those families who watch for their arrival and see that nothing untoward happens while they are in the neighborhood.

Asked how the Foundation evaluates its volunteers, O'Callaghan said, "The first question is: Do they show up? And if one can't show up that day, does he or she let us know?" Another evaluation point: How does the volunteer interact in the classroom? Do the kids and teachers like this individual? How does the volunteer feel about being in the

classroom? An evaluation point for the volunteers who work with case managers: Has the volunteer been a help in the work? And in evaluating "Buddies": How's the kid doing in the eyes of his or her mother? Has the child made progress, kept out of trouble?

O'Callaghan admits to being surprised as to the "stick-to-it" nature of the volunteers.

"It amazes me," she says, "how people stick to it in this risky neighborhood, how important getting to their volunteer assignment is to them. We have one volunteer, for example, who changed his work schedule so he could come in on a regular basis; he has been doing this weekly for a year now. We have another who works in a for-profit organization who thanked us for giving back his self-respect."

All volunteers meet regularly with O'Callaghan so they can voice concerns and questions and receive needed resources and support.

☐ Information: Angela O'Callaghan, Volunteer Coordinator, The Foundation for Children with AIDS, 1800 Columbus Ave., Roxbury MA 02119; (617) 442-7442. ■

A Friend in Court

Day after day in Los Angeles County (California), hundreds of abused and neglected children appear in court. Dependency Court judges have to decide for these children where each will live, who may visit them, where the child will go to school and what medical, psychological or educational treatment is needed.

The child's voice in this court is not a lawyer or social worker, but a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer. Working as part of the Los Angeles Superior Court's Child Advocates Office, CASA volunteers are appointed by Juvenile Court judges to advocate for specific children who need someone to help ease the fear and trauma of court hearings, someone to see that the child's physical and emotional needs are listened to and represented to the

court, and someone with the time, caring and commitment to give to a child. Children represented range in age from newborns to teenagers.

CASA volunteers are specially trained to serve as independent advocates for children's best interest and welfare; they supplement the work of attorneys and social workers. They are a steady, comforting presence to a frightened child caught in the strange, lonely limbo of the legal system.

Two hundred thirty-four volunteers, 87 of them new in the past year, now assist an eight-member professional staff in the Child Advocates Office. During the 1992-93 year, 226 CASA volunteers served 610 children—350 of them new during the year, giving 57,738 hours.

CASA volunteers must enjoy working with children, be at least 21 years of age, submit to fingerprinting and criminal history clearance and have proof of automobile liability coverage. They commit five to six hours a week, for or with the child, for a minimum of two years. They complete 30 hours of initial training and because their role is one of advocacy and interaction with the court, they essentially are always in in-service training.

Renne Bilson, the program's 1993 Volunteer of the Year, has been a CASA volunteer since 1986. She got into it because it precisely met her needs at the time. She was thinking about getting a master's degree in social work, but also could handle only a part-time obligation because her son was then very young. CASA volunteering seemed to fit the bill. She took the some 30 hours of training and found that the work fulfilled all her desire to help young people but didn't tie her down full-time.

Now, seven years later, she says, "I love it! I truly believe we make a difference—sometimes a big one, sometimes just a little one, but we have an impact on the life of a child we work with." Bilson presently gives about 15 hours a week to her CASA work. She currently has five cases.

"The time you have to put in can swing a lot," she says. "Children live in places scattered all over the Los Angeles area; you do a lot of driving. And children's placements also change. I spend a lot of time on the freeways."

When Bilson began her CASA volunteering, she found some of the judges skeptical about volunteers developing case reports and advocating for the children before the court, but she has seen that grow into total acceptance of the role of the volunteers.

"We are well trained and well supervised," she says. "At first it seems intimidating to stand up in court with your assigned child and tell the judge what you've learned about his or her situation and what you think the court should do. But as you get into it, you become committed and it gets easier to speak to the child's situation and needs. You put in a lot of time at the beginning of a case on the phone and traveling to learn every bit of information you can find about this child."

The worst part of the job? "It's dealing with the frustration at the fact that there's sometimes no good solution; you have to settle for something that's just okay."

The best part? "The times when you feel that your report and input really had an impact, really helped to change the child's life for the better."

Bilson would advise anyone considering the CASA volunteer program to remember that upon entering the program one has lots of guidance available.

Do cases ever end? "Yes," says Bilson, "they do. They ease off as a child's life becomes more stable and the need for an advocate is less. The CASA volunteer may feel that it's time to end a case, or the staff may. Afterward you may or may not hear again from the child. Sometimes you get Christmas cards, sometimes a piece of good or bad news."

Bilson sums up: "I will definitely stay with this. I can't imagine not doing it; I truly think of it as my job. I know an older gentlemen who is really committed for life as a CASA volunteer. He tells me that he sometimes thinks maybe he should hang it up, but then he thinks there may be a child out there who needs me."

☐ Information: CASA, 2722 Eastlake Avenue East, Suite 220, Seattle, WA 98102, (206) 328-8588. ■

Foundation News

Family Matters Participates in Capitol Hill Teach-in

The Communitarian Network held its day-long "Capitol Hill Teach-In on the Future of the Family" at the Rayburn House Office Building on November 3, 1993. The purpose of the conference, according to Communitarian Network founder Dr. Amitai Etzioni, was to "find new economic and social strategies to help America become a pro-family society. We want to enable parents to be parents. Families are the first moral line of defense in creating responsible, caring children and citizens."

FAMILY MATTERS

The Points of Light Foundation's Family Matters program, which seeks to empower families to engage in volunteering that addresses critical community needs, was featured through presentations by the Foundation Vice President of Nonprofit Outreach Virginia Austin and Appalachian Communities for Children (ACC) Executive Director Judy Martin. ACC is a Family Matters pilot site.

Emphasizing the importance of taking action to combat community problems, Austin highlighted the role Family Matters plays in reaching the Communitarian Network's goals of encouraging socially responsible citizens and keeping family issues at the forefront of the public agenda: "We aspire to create a national family service movement," she said, "because we believe it can reinforce—indeed, advance—the concepts of responsibility and citizenship articulated in the Communitarian principles." ■

1994 President's Awards Program Announced

The Foundation has announced the 1994 President's Volunteer Action Awards Program. Cosponsored by the Foundation and the new Corporation on National and Community Service, the awards program marks the 13th year of this prestigious award for volunteer community service.

Awards will be presented next spring to volunteers and volunteer organizations addressing critical social problems in four category areas:

- Education
- Environment
- Public Safety
- Human Services

The deadline for submitting nominations is January 14, 1994. For information and/or nomination forms, contact: Karen Barnes, (202) 223-9186, ext. 199. ■

Foundation, United Way Sign Memo of Understanding

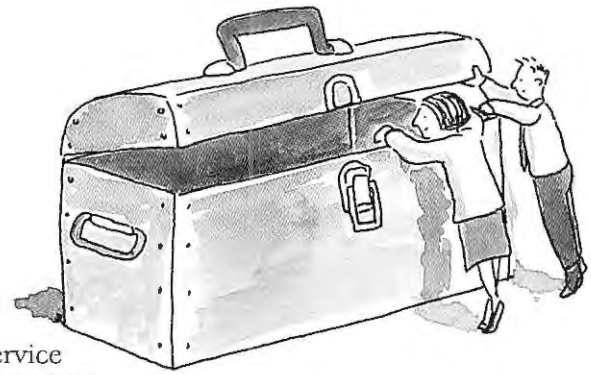
On September 29, 1993, Foundation President and CEO Richard F. Schubert and United Way President Elaine Chao signed a formal memorandum of understanding to collaborate in giving technical and support services to Volunteer Centers, thereby eliminating duplicative efforts.

As a result of the agreement, the Foundation will take the lead in providing the services to all Volunteer Centers regardless of the auspices under which they operate. United Way of America will supplement the Foundation's services to the Centers, particularly in its relationship to local United Way Member Organizations and in providing technical assistance for specific initiatives, such as technology, youth involvement and diversity. ■

1994 Catalog Published

The new 1994 Community Service Catalog is available. This year's edition includes more than 30 exciting new publications and a new line of products with the 1994 theme and logo—"Volunteers, The Promise of a Nation"—in addition to favorite books and products available from last year. Call (800) 272-8306 to obtain a free copy. ■

Tool Box



What is **AmeriCorps?** The Corporation for Community and National Service has issued a brochure that discusses in great detail the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 signed by President Clinton on September 21. It includes information on Americorps, the program which provides meaningful opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to serve their country.

☐ For a copy write to: The Corporation for National and Community Service, 1100 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20525.

The ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career and Vocational Education has brought out a guide to help practitioners become better consumers of workplace literacy resources. **Workplace Literacy: A Guide to the Literature and Resources,** by Susan Imel and Sandra Kerka, includes information on how to locate materials in ERIC and other databases, a bibliography of selected resources, program descriptions that illustrate innovative approaches or special problems, a list of resource organizations, information on funded workplace literacy projects, and a guide for adult educators in locating information.

☐ Available for $7.00 + $3.50/ shipping from Publications, Center on Education and Training for Employment, 1900 Kenny Road, Columbus OH 43210-1090 (Order No. IN 352; quantity discounts).

What do a community service director, a rabbi, a campaign manager and a nonprofit executive director have in common? "All of them," notes the Association for Volunteer Administration, "work closely with—and may themselves be—a volunteer. All of them need to have...the ability to recruit, coach, support, train, evaluate and recognize people who are giving their time and skills...All rarely consider themselves volunteer administrators or people working or volunteering in the field of volunteer administration, but that is one of the hats they wear...they and the organizations they work for need to take seriously that aspect of their jobs." Thus, AVA published a booklet, **Volunteer Administration: Portrait of a Profession,** "to show policy makers, funders and others what volunteer administration is all about."

☐ Available for $5.00 from AVA, P.O. Box 4584, Boulder CO 80306, (303) 541-0238.

Get Ready For Anything! Published by The Points of Light Foundation, *Get Ready For Anything* provides a set of action principles to help guide the development of a youth service coalition in your community and includes examples of how other young people have teamed up to address important community needs in seven local communities.

☐ Available for $1.50 + shipping from Volunteer Readership, 1-800-272-8306.

One of the latest reforms in America's education system—service-learning—is the focus of **Schools and Communities: Creating Places of Learning,** another Points of Light Foundation publication. Describing service-learning as a "method of teaching and learning that combines academic work with service and social action," this publication examines the role for service-learning and service-learning in action. It also makes recommendations for creating a service-learning environment, including suggestions for national and state policymakers, state education agencies, school boards, school administrators, teachers, students, parents, businesses and community members.

☐ Available for $1.75 + shipping from Volunteer Readership, 1-800-272-8306.

The Minnesota Office on Volunteer Services (MOVS) has developed a booklet to assist organizations nationwide in working effectively with youth who provide service through their programs. **The Power and Potential of Youth in Service to Communities** places special emphasis on the impact of volunteerism and community service on youth as well as the organizations, agencies, communities and individuals who are touched by the services of youth. Companion materials, designed for trainers who will utilize the book as a basis for preparing leaders in community organizations to understand the national and community service movement and to work effectively with young people, are being prepared now for distribution.

☐ Available for $15.00 + tax and $3.00 shipping from MOVS, 800-657-3783. ■

A NEW NAME AND A NEW LOOK

Leadership

Voluntary Action Leadership—an invaluable resource for volunteer program administrators for over 18 years—has a new name and a new look.

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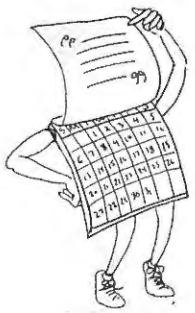
Calendar



The Calendar lists upcoming events that may be of interest to readers. Inclusion, however, does not constitute Points of Light Foundation endorsement.

December 1-4 *28th Annual National Conference of the National Community Education Association,* Nashville, Tennessee. Information: Marilyn Kerns, (703) 683-6232.

1994

March 3-5 *1994 National Service-Learning Conference,* Albuquerque, New Mexico. Theme: "Service-Learning: Leadership for Community Renewal," this conference is sponsored by the National Youth Leadership Council and hosted by the National Indian Youth Leadership Project. Information: National Indian Youth Leadership Project, PO Box 11849, Albuquerque, NM 87192, (505) 299-9209.

April 17-23 *National Volunteer Week*

May 21-24 *1994 National CASA Conference,* Tampa, Florida. Theme: "Mapping the Distance Home." Information: The National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association, 2722 Eastlake Avenue East, Suite 220, Seattle, WA 98102, (206) 328-8588.

June 11-14 *1994 National Community Service Conference,* Washington, D.C. The Points of Light Foundation's annual conference will take place at the Omni Shoreham Hotel. Theme: "Volunteers, The Promise of a Nation." See ad on page 2 and watch future issues of *Leadership* for details.

October 30-November 3 *The 1994 International Conference of the International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE),* Tokyo, Japan. IAVE's 13th biennial conference will attract more than 400 people from at least 80 countries and will include field visits to local volunteer programs in Tokyo and other cities in Japan. Registration fee: $250 (U.S. dollars) for IAVE members; $300 non-members. Housing available at National Youth Center (approx. $50 per night) and at the Keio Plaza Hotel ($125 per night shared). More information: Kenn Allen, The Points of Light Foundation, (202) 223-9186.

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