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Lynne Whitehead & Joan Wyatt

Regional Representatives

Rosemary Byrne, Faiza Kanji
Tammy Stadt and Charlene Robson

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Subscriptions and correspondence can be sent to:
2222 Fillmore Cr., Ottawa, K1J 6A3
contact@cjvrm.org

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EDITORIAL

Volunteers of all ages make important contributions to organizations. Intergenerational volunteering provides an opportunity for volunteers to share learning from each generation, while also strengthening volunteer bases.

In this issue, we explore some innovative examples of intergenerational volunteering from organizations across the country. Clare O’Kelly and Bonita A. Stableford begin by giving us an in-depth look at how an intergenerational volunteer team at Burnaby Hospital helped not only to create a strategic plan for youth volunteering, but also to increase respect and understanding between two different generations of volunteers. Margaret D. Bell outlines how the May Court Club of Ottawa – with members ranging in age from 24 to 94 – have been volunteering in the community for over 100 years. Marg Coll and Catherine Mason share lessons from a program which offers the opportunity for students to interact with healthy and active older adults. And Kirsten Keil-Mehlenbacher shares her story about how participating in a volunteer program where she took her infant daughter to elementary school classes helped her to experience the benefits of intergenerational volunteering first-hand.

Just as importantly, this issue highlights some of the ways to attract volunteers of different generations to work together in your organization. Noreen Main takes us into the minds of “Generation Y” and gives some advice on how managers of volunteer resources can best attract these young, skilled and enthusiastic volunteers. Don Lapierre gives advice on how to enhance opportunities for family and intergenerational volunteer programs, while insights from the Community Experience Initiative national internship program provide lessons on how to attract new graduates to careers in the voluntary sector.

Faiza Kanji reviews a unique six-part radio series by Linda Graff and Paul Reed on trends in volunteerism in Canada. Our peer experts discuss how to support aging volunteers as they transition out of the volunteer force. And finally, we highlight the work of CJVRM’s regional representatives and their important contributions to the journal.

We hope this issue provides you with new ideas and tools to help introduce or increase intergenerational volunteering in your organization.

Lesley Abraham
CJVRM Editorial Committee Member

STAGING AN INTERGENERATIONAL SUCCESS THROUGH STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR YOUTH VOLUNTEERS

by Clare O’Kelly and Bonita A. Stableford

Mixing five energetic, highly motivated, idea-filled university students with a 55-year-old facilitator could spell disaster in some cases. At Burnaby Hospital, this intergenerational mix was an unexpected success. This small intergenerational team created a strategic plan for our Youth Volunteer Council. In the process, we ended up with a great map for the future and gained increased respect amongst (mostly older) paid staff for the skills, expertise and energy that our student volunteers contribute. What contributed to the success of this project? Like a theatrical production, success hinged on a well designed setting, the right director, committed actors and an excellent script.

The Setting

Young people are our future leaders and hospitals are well suited to take advantage of the higher numbers of youth who volunteer. We had focused for many years on building a positive environment for youth through such activities as focus groups, involving youth in program evaluation and training. In 2006, the youth volunteers at Burnaby Hospital asked to form a council to better engage youth volunteers. In its first two years, the Youth Volunteer Council - YVC for short - completed several very useful projects and created much stronger connections among the youth. As a result, it has helped Burnaby Hospital to significantly improve retention of its younger volunteers.

There were growing pains, however. While retention and satisfaction amongst our youth had gone way up, the parallel value to patients and staff was less obvious. Directing their efforts to projects useful to the hospital without dampening their youthful enthusiasm and energy was a delicate balance. Convincing staff to take time to mentor and supervise younger volunteers was an ongoing challenge. While the hospital appreciated the contributions of young people, we needed to ensure that their involvement added value to the patient and staff experience.

Opening Act

The Opening Act occurred in my screening interview with a 55-year-old prospective volunteer. Typical of the baby boomer generation, she had professional skills which she wanted to contribute as a volunteer. It can be challenging to integrate the skills of highly educated, experienced professionals into a traditional volunteer setting. She helped to overcome this challenge by asking cogent questions about all the volunteer activities in our hospital in an

effort to find a fit for her skills and expertise. After careful consideration, she proposed a way to strengthen our youth volunteer programs. She suggested helping the Youth Volunteer Council create a strategic plan as a focus for their activities over the next three years.

Both the YVC Chair and I became very enthusiastic about this idea and we met several times with the potential facilitator to discuss in detail what it would entail. We realized, however, that our enthusiasm was not sufficient. To be successful it was critical that the YVC make its own choice and fully support the strategic planning process. While we encouraged the idea, the Council discussed it in camera and agreed to go ahead. Five members chose to join a strategic planning (SP) subcommittee. This self-selection of only those who were most interested was key to the project’s success.

We did not “spring” the facilitator on them. The YVC became acquainted with the proposed facilitator in a two-hour meeting, with a PowerPoint presentation and a Q & A session. Hence, both generations gained some sense of who they might be working with.

The Director

Also key to the project’s success was the experience and expertise of the Facilitator. Recently retired as a manager from a local university, she had trained many students, taught graduate level courses and had led groups through the planning process. More importantly, she really enjoyed working with young people. Her insight into how this age group works and what might motivate them – or not – was a plus. As she said, “the liberal application of chocolate at critical points in meetings also helped!” While the meeting content was serious, the tone was light and fun was encouraged. Being as technically savvy as the youth members was also important.

More important was the Facilitator’s incredible dedication to the project. She held meetings in her home, brought home baked goodies and spent time meeting with hospital administrators to pave the way for interviews and to gain necessary background to ensure the project’s success. Without this, it is questionable whether the project would have been as successful.

The Script

Our Facilitator prepared a two-page table briefly describing the activities involved, the number of meetings required and the end “products” for each activity. This became our “script” for the next nine months.

Since students are well accustomed to doing research, the Facilitator had the team start with an environmental scan. Over several months the team researched the Burnaby community, trends in volunteering and youth, and activities at other hospitals. They even read the 57-page long strategic plan for our Health Authority!

After identifying major stakeholders, they interviewed 16 key staff members from the CEO level to line-staff. The interviews were intended to give the team an understanding of the actual needs of various hospital units, thereby ensuring realistic projects.

After assessing the rich variety of information from the interviews, the team pulled out possible projects that could be addressed by our youth volunteers. Next, the team completed a SWOT Analysis of the Youth Volunteer Council, using the interview comments and their own views.

Once the team was immersed in ideas for the YVC's future, they agreed that the mission needed to be revised and discussed in several meetings to write a suitable new version.

The team assessed each project to see if it was feasible and then prioritized the projects and assigned them to Year 1, 2 and 3. The entire planning process included 17 meetings, each about three hours long, plus an enormous amount of "homework" in between meetings.

The Final Report of the Strategic Planning Team includes a research summary of the environmental scan, summary of the interview results, the new mission statement and goals, and planned projects with timelines.

The Actors

When groups are set up, occasionally the right mix of people creates magic. Our best efforts to create effective groups do not always achieve this, but our strategic planning team turned out to be just such a group. The five youth committee members – all regular volunteers as well as members of the YVC – are among the best, and certainly the most dedicated, at Burnaby Hospital. All are either working full time or are full time students. Every team member remained committed and engaged throughout this lengthy process. The YVC plan could not have been produced without their commitment and willingness to buckle down and do the work. The YVC Chair saw this as an educational opportunity. In her words: "As a business student, participating ... in the creation of a strategic plan was an excellent educational opportunity. Applying the concepts, [SWOT analysis, environmental scan and stakeholder identification] to a real-life setting, augmented the theory I had learnt in my strategy, management and marketing classes." Crucial to the project, the Chair's commitment maintained the involvement of the team.

The Supporting Crew

Key to the success was the support of individuals within the hospital administration. The Site Administrator – our CEO – made time to meet with the Facilitator and team members to provide background, ideas and input into

the process. Her championing of the project was key in convincing other managers and staff to participate in interviews.

As the Manager of Volunteer Resources, I felt it was important to maintain a hands-off approach as much as possible, allowing the team to come up with their own plan. Knowing that the group had an experienced, skilled facilitator allowed me to feel comfortable doing this. Also, being copied on all emails helped me to track activities, provide input and ask questions without adding numerous meetings. My normal meetings with the YVC Chair gave another chance to discuss their activities.

The Reviews

Any theatrical production is subject to critics' reviews. What are the lessons learned and the benefits gained?

The small size of the SP group was right and more effective than if all YVC members had been involved. As one member commented: "Four to five members was great. It was enough so that varied perspectives were provided ... conflicts for scheduling meetings [were reduced]."

As a small group, there was considerable pressure for each individual to pull his or her own weight. Volunteers felt a strong commitment to the team and realized that individual contributions were crucial. The SP members commented that, in working so closely together, they become good friends. They see these as continuing friendships.

As a real bonus all youth volunteers gained a much higher profile through the interviews and I received many very positive comments about youth volunteers. This goodwill was tangible some months later when many of our health professionals willingly gave up an evening to participate in this year's Health Careers Symposium for youth. Staff "got" the very important message that these volunteers are their future working partners.

Other volunteers commented that they were completely unaware of the extent of weekend and evening volunteer programs, and the calibre of young people involved in them.

To be consistent with this youth-driven process, we asked the SP committee members to comment on what they learned. Some areas, particularly communication skills, matched what we anticipated. They also had surprisingly positive comments on the intergenerational aspects:

"I enjoyed interacting with administrators and staff in the hospital. They are mentors and role models ... and getting to meet and learn from them has given me a glimpse of what my future may hold for me.

"...also great to work with someone who has much life experience..."

"I truly enjoyed working with [our facilitator]. Usually I get intimidated with authoritative figures ... but [she] never made me feel that way. She was always

encouraging and made me believe that I was doing a great job every step of the way.”

“I didn’t feel the generational gap at all!”

Final Act

The tangible result of this multi-act production is a written strategic plan with a revised mission statement for the YVC, four major goal areas and a timetable for 26 workable, useful projects. The YVC Strategic Plan report will soon be released within Burnaby Hospital. The intangible result was an unexpectedly strong bond that formed between the five youth volunteers and the Facilitator.

Curtain Call

What next? The team will present the Plan to the full YVC and we are now looking for another baby boomer volunteer with experience in project management to help them set up timelines and project plans.

Although we did this project in a hospital setting, it would work as well in other sectors. Young volunteers want to gain first-hand experience about many different careers and pairing them with experienced mentors is a perfect way to engage intergenerational volunteers.

Stay tuned for upcoming productions from Burnaby Hospital's YVC Troupe – supported by experienced adult mentors: a truly intergenerational production!

References:

1. http://www.givingandvolunteering.ca/pdf/CSGVP_Highlights_2004_en.pdf p. 10.
2. See the YVC website at <http://bhyvc.com/events.html> for a list of past YVC projects.
3. See <http://www.allianceonline.org/boomers.page> for discussion of Baby Boomer Volunteer issues.
4. See http://www.ic.gc.ca/epic/site/dir-ect.nsf/en/h_uw00926e.html for description of SWOT Analysis.

Clare O’Kelly is Manager of Volunteer Resources at Burnaby Hospital in the Greater Vancouver area where she has worked for the past 14 years. Clare is currently on the board of her provincial organization, AVRBC, and is the Provincial Representative for CAVR. She is mother of five, an avid reader and amateur gardener. As a lifelong volunteer, Bonnie Stableford has worked with street-involved youth, multiply challenged children, disadvantaged persons, as a pet visitor with seniors and as a crisis line counselor. Recently retired, she was a senior manager for libraries in two federal government departments, for the Université d’Ottawa and most recently for UBC.

THE MAY CLUB OF OTTAWA: OVER 100 YEARS OF SERVING THE COMMUNITY

by Margaret D. Bell

On Saturday, April 30, 1898, Lady Aberdeen, wife of the Governor General of Canada, invited 100 young society ladies of Ottawa to a garden party at Rideau Hall to celebrate May Day. Following an English tradition, one young lady, Ethel Hamilton who was the daughter of the Anglican Bishop of Ottawa, was crowned May Queen and seventeen other young ladies were appointed to her court.

However, Lady Aberdeen had other ideas in mind beyond a purely social role for these young women. During her husband’s vice-regal years, she had already established the National Council of Women and the Victorian Order of Nurses, and, in her speech at the garden party, she exhorted these Ottawa debutantes to devote their time, energy and money to helping those less fortunate than themselves. And so, the May Court Club of Ottawa was born.

In the years that followed, the May Court Club was the source of many charitable initiatives. In 1908, the Club opened the first tuberculosis dispensary in Canada, and the fourth of its kind in the world. In 1916 it established a convalescent home which operated until 1997, and in 1925 it opened the library at the Ottawa Civic Hospital, at the request of the hospital’s superintendent. This library continues to provide books, magazines and audio tapes to the patients today. From knitting socks for World War I to learning car repairs in World War II, the May Court Club always tried to fill a need when it arose.

Currently, the May Court Club of Ottawa’s activities include the library at the Ottawa Hospital - Civic Campus, the Emergency Food Box Program (providing healthy snacks for hungry children in 50 Ottawa area schools) and a Knitting Committee, established in 1907 (recently donating 250 “blankets-for-babies” to the Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario). Club members volunteer at receptions at the Citizenship Court for new Canadians, in several areas of the Hospice at May Court, in the Early Literacy program in Ottawa schools and at the Women’s Breast Health Centre. It also gives financial aid to needy organizations, provides scholarships to two Nurse Practitioner students and has recently established a scholarship for a Library Sciences post-graduate student at the University of Ottawa. Funding for these projects comes, in part, from fund-raising events and from the May Court Bargain Box, a shop that sells gently-used clothing and household articles in the heart of the University of Ottawa district – a haven for bargain hunters and students in need of apartment necessities. The Club also works closely with the Hospice at May Court to whom it provides rent-free accommodation and a grant to help cover ongoing costs.

One hundred and ten years after its inception, the May Court Club of Ottawa still pursues its goals of improving the lives of those in need, especially women, children and those in need of health care, be it physical or mental. However, over the years the demographics of the Club have changed dramatically. The first members were all young, unmarried women and it was only in 1908 that married women were allowed to retain their membership. With the passage of time the Club evolved; until the 1970s many members were young mothers, free to give volunteer hours while their children were at school. Today, the situation has changed with many young women currently in the work force and, while the Club still attracts the “younger set”, the greatest recruitment is among women who have finished their careers or who are “empty nesters”.

Today, the membership of the May Court Club of Ottawa spans many generations – from the Life Members, who have served 50 years in the Club, to young women in their twenties who find that the Club offers an outlet for their desire to serve their community. Our oldest (until recently, active) member is 94; our youngest is 24 and each learns from the other. New members learn the long-standing tradition of service and, as one young mother of two said, “When I joined the Club, I had found a community of mentors, amazing women who had dedicated so much of their time to helping others”. Another wrote “[I have] welcomed the opportunity to learn about the needs in my community and the Club has provided the resources for me to make a difference.” At the same time, the Club learns from its younger members how to be relevant in today’s society. This has been one of the driving forces in the Club for more than a century. We have learned how to adapt to the times but have still retained the important traditions of service and financial aid to the community that we strive to serve by “enriching the lives of others as well as our own”. Every generation has something to offer to those who come after or who have come before!

Margaret D. Bell began her association with the May Court Club of Ottawa in 1997 after a long career as a Space Physicist at the National Research Council. She served as Recording Secretary from 1999-2001, Vice President from 2002-2004 and President of the Club from 2004-2006. She is presently the Vice President of the Association of May Court Clubs of Canada.

THE 5 WS OF THE Y GENERATION

by Noreen Mian

Generation Y, or “Y Gen”, are youth born between 1980 and 1993 and can be characterized as the charismatic siblings of the more controlled Generation X. Their high energy and, at times, “high maintenance” is bewildering to managers and sometimes results in the misconception that they are selfish, unfocused and impatient.

The Y Gen’s attitude towards work contrasts with that of their parents, and the effects are being felt throughout the workforce and volunteer sector. However, these youth are a unique generation of volunteers who are normalizing a new approach to life, work and volunteering.

Who are they?

Generation Y is distinct in four ways:

1. **High self-esteem:** Y Gens grew up with praise and positive reinforcement, and, as a result, are always looking for feedback.
2. **Educationally-minded:** Volunteering is no longer just about feeling good. Youth recognize the value of skill-building and are customizing their experiences to gain a competitive edge.
3. **Paving the way to a more open, tolerant society:** Y Gens see talent as the primary determinant of success and are less concerned with definitions among racial, ethnic or religious lines.
4. **Leading a new wave of volunteerism:** Generation Y is seeking meaningful involvement through tasks that are vital to an organization’s mission and goals.

Why are they volunteering?

Between the ages of 15 to 25, there are typically several significant events that occur. It is important to recognize that the type of experience youth are seeking depends on their age.

- **15-18:** High school students are volunteering for extra credit, course requirement and to become eligible for scholarships and bursaries. More and more, community service hours are required for graduation.
- **19-24:** If they are attending post-secondary school, this age group is looking for experience related to their field of study.
- **25+:** This group of young adults is (in the author’s opinion) more likely to volunteer at one-time events in order to maintain a work-life balance. They are also looking for skills that they are not gaining in entry level positions.

What are they looking for?

Regardless of age, there are three key questions that Y Gens are asking when they approach a volunteer position.

- **What value can I add to the organization?** Youth want to know if your organization needs their skills, opinions and time.
- **What can I learn today?** Y Gens are seeking skills that will help them advance in school and the workplace.
- **What will you offer me today?** Be upfront about the tangible benefits of the position. Are there free snacks? Bus tickets? Will you be a reference?

When are they volunteering?

Youth are looking for short-term opportunities. A relatively new phenomenon, it poses a problem for organizations who spend a lot of time screening and training youth volunteers. To be flexible, it may be necessary to speed up your intake process in order to accommodate a more limited schedule.

Where can I find them?

Career and volunteer fairs are a great venue to attract Y Gens because research shows that face-to-face recruiting is best. When speaking to youth, be clear about:

- **The required task:** Explicitly state what the volunteer position entails. Remember, most youth are looking to develop specific skills.
- **The cause your organization serves:** Regardless of age, there is always some degree of personal resonance. Highlight your organization's mandate.
- **The length of the commitment:** Is the position a set number of hours? A one-time event? An ongoing opportunity?

You can also recruit indirectly within your organization. Prepare a "Did You Know?" fact sheet that volunteers and staff can take home to their kids and grandkids.

Y Gens have grown up with technology and the internet is the first place they will go to find information. When posting volunteer positions, make sure the title is appealing and reflects the job description. Avoid generic headings like: "various positions available".

Supporting Y Gen Volunteers

Sufficient support and supervision: Mentorships with staff or other volunteers are an ideal way to ensure that Y Gens are getting the feedback they need. Praise and positive feedback ensures that youth volunteers know their time is being used wisely.

Genuine respect from directors, program participants and other volunteers:

One of the biggest determinants of youth retention is whether they feel welcome. Within the culture of your organization, is there an atmosphere that nurtures and values youth? To facilitate a positive experience, introduce new volunteers through email beforehand. Giving everyone a "heads up" should help minimize the tension that often results from unexpected change.

Generation Y can be summed up as an energetic group who seek meaningful involvement and short-term opportunities. Youth want their time and presence to be taken seriously and are looking for positive attitudes, genuine appreciation and age-appropriate responsibility.

Noreen Mian is both a Y Gen and the coordinator of Manitoba Youth Volunteer Opportunities. MYVOP is an organization that promotes active citizenship by engaging youth through meaningful volunteer activities and community projects. Our youth referral website currently boasts over 200 volunteer opportunities around the province of Manitoba. For more information, visit: www.myvop.ca

Sources:

This article was based on a series of workshops delivered in partnership with Volunteer Manitoba.

Information for this article was taken from:

Managing Generation Y

Carolyn A. Martin, Ph.D, Bruce Tulgan

Published by HRD Press, 2001

FAMILY AND INTERGENERATIONAL VOLUNTEERING – OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND

by Don Lapierre

With a growing number of volunteering opportunities in communities across Canada, the potential impact of family and intergenerational volunteering has yet to be discovered.

"The concept of family has changed dramatically in a relatively short period of time, from a uniform socially acceptable model of the

nuclear family with clear behavioural parameters and roles, to a broadly defined social construct. 'Family' is now any group of people that defines itself as such.

The family structure has also become much less hierarchical. Spousal relationships are more egalitarian and, with both parents often working outside of the home, children participate more actively in households and in basic decision-making. Families now take a team approach to day-to-day living.”¹

Furthermore, demographic projections for Canadian society indicate that our major cities – Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal – are growing more quickly than Los Angeles, Chicago and New York. Our society is growing, diversifying and aging. In many parts of the country, population growth is driven largely by immigration and increasing diversity. As a result, close-knit families with strong family ties may provide valuable opportunities for those wishing to expand their volunteer base.

Of course, no two families are alike and questions should always arise around the generality of any recruitment campaign. It is worthy, however, to consider recruitment processes that may be unique to particular immigrant groups. Findings will no doubt involve complex and multi-dimensional analyses.

Given the influence of immigration on our society, failure to recognize and utilize newcomers to Canada in civic engagement and volunteer involvement will negatively impact our society and the role of new immigrants.

The resulting challenge will be that of facilitating a bridging process between members of ethno-cultural (newcomer) communities and “culturally competent” volunteer experiences. This would promote their social, cultural and civic participation in Canadian society by creating broader social networks.

Regardless of any family's roots, everyone's time is infringed on by the many demands of life in the 21st century. Time together as a family is increasingly difficult to find. However, family volunteering can present excellent opportunities to spend time together while exploring many different environments. Schools, special events, sports, health care, elder care, literacy, the environment, disaster relief – they can all be considered a potential volunteer venue with benefits for both the family and community.

When asked, families cite a variety of motivations when considering what to take on voluntarily within their community. “Though social motivations do play a role (for example, other friends and neighbours are already volunteering), value

motivation is much more important in the decision of a family to volunteer. [One of the] main reasons families volunteer together includes parents wanting to be positive role models and transmit values to their children....”²

As a result, intergenerational discrepancies in core values will often be explored while having fun spending quality time together working on a volunteer project. This may in fact prompt interest in the next generation to volunteer on a regular basis. Children who volunteer often adopt the perception that volunteering expands their world view and helps prepare them for their future adult roles in society.

Whether the volunteering occurs in formal settings (for example, through an organization), or is done informally (for example, grandparents teaching their grandchildren math or reading skills), family volunteering enables parents, grandparents, children and extended family members to give their time to worthwhile activities while spending sought-after time together.

Some community programs offer intergenerational opportunities for those who, for whatever reason, are not able to participate with their own family members. From the community perspective, the pairing of youth and elders unfolds community-wide impacts that are of great value. By working together, youth and elders enable and model community collaboration, pooling of resources and cooperative problem solving. All participants learn from and respect each other's traditions and stories. They also learn to value and accept diversity and break down negative stereotypes that generations may have of each other. Furthermore, communities gain awareness about issues affecting multiple generations.

The success of any volunteer organization relies on its ability to recruit and retain talented, dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers. By enabling and enhancing opportunities for family and intergenerational volunteer programs, we will begin to create the next generation of volunteers. Fostering the value and culture of volunteerism as a pillar of this country is a responsibility held by all generations. After all, every new beginning comes from a previous beginning's end.

Don LaPierre is Senior Manager of Programs and Voluntary Sector Relations at Volunteer Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.

For more information on family volunteering: www.volunteer.ca.

1 Volunteer Canada, “Volunteer Connections: Family Volunteering – Making It Official” (2004): 5.

2 Ibid.

OTTAWA LIFELONG LEARNING FOR OLDER ADULTS

by Marg Coll and Catherine Mason

Ottawa Lifelong Learning (OLL) for Older Adults began life in 1993 as Algonquin Lifelong Learning (ALL) for Older Adults.

An initiative of the Health and Biological Sciences programs at Algonquin College, the objective was to provide opportunities for students in those programs to interact with well, healthy, active, older adults.

Members acted as patients in learning labs and met with students in one-on-one situations in their homes where students had objectives to achieve relative to the lives of older adults. These partnering experiences helped students enhance their therapeutic and communication skills.

As membership grew, other avenues of partnering evolved. Algonquin's Dental, Foot Care, Body Massage, health seminars and Practical Nursing programs provided additional partnering opportunities. Shortly thereafter, students in the University of Ottawa's Nursing Program became partners in this successful venture.

While partnering with students was the initiative and mandate for the organization, members organized and participated in book clubs, walking clubs, current affairs discussion groups, computer courses, as well as the yearly highlight – "An Intergenerational Day" where students and members, under the tutelage of trained facilitators, had the opportunity to "discuss and discover". This day allowed both generations to realize that they shared more similarities than differences. It was a day of laughter and joyful surprises for both.

Within a few years members were seeking other opportunities to participate in venues outside the purview of Algonquin's nursing programs. Thus we saw the evolution from Algonquin Lifelong Learning (ALL) for Older Adults to Ottawa Lifelong Learning (OLL) for Older Adults.

OLL members, while still retaining the partnering experiences with students enrolled in Algonquin and the University of Ottawa's Nursing Programs, broadened their horizons to include elementary schools. Under the aegis of OCRI's successful Volunteers in Education program, members read to children and assisted them with their studies such as math, composition, spelling, public speaking, drama, or simply listening.

Today, OLL is still an active, thriving organization. Boasting 150 members, they continue their partnership with students in Algonquin's Nursing Programs as well as other activities that promote well, healthy and active lifestyles for older adults.

Marg Coll is the current president of OLL and Catherine Mason is the former president of ALL and OLL.

ATTRACTING RECENT GRADUATES TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

by Lesley Abraham

Hiring recent graduates can bring fresh energy and insight to an organization. How can we encourage the next generation of management professionals to consider the voluntary sector as a viable career choice? A workshop conducted by the Community Experience Initiative (CEI) aimed to answer this very question and their findings can help to attract young people to become managers of volunteer resources.

The CEI is a national internship program that aims to link Canadian business schools with the voluntary sector by placing undergraduate and graduate students in paid positions with not-for-profit organizations across the country. With the support of the HRVS project (Human Resources in the Voluntary Sector Project - now the HR Council for the Voluntary & Non-profit Sector) the program has arranged placements for 83 students since its inception in 2000. In 2003, 26 of these students were asked to participate in a workshop to discuss their experience with the program, including their perceptions of the voluntary sector and how the sector can work to recruit more young management professionals to the field.

A number of the job attributes that students highlighted as important are common to potential employees of any age. These factors include:

- being able to directly help people in need;
- experiencing and facilitating human connection across differences;
- working with people who care about their well-being;
- working with people who inspire them;
- working with diverse groups of people; and
- expanding their skills and knowledge and putting them to use.

One of the most important factors was the ability to see the impact that their work was having. As one former student said:

“When I first started working at the organization, I wasn’t too sure what was going on until I actually saw the unveiling of the numbers - showing what the campaign had raised for the agencies. It almost made me cry ... I was amazed, so amazed at what they could do.”

The students also faced a number of challenges in their work. One of the challenges cited is “ageism”. Many of the students, particularly those in management positions, felt that they had problems gaining legitimacy and respect due to their youth. This problem was exacerbated by the fact that they rarely had peers in the organization to turn to for support. Some students indicated that they felt that there was a prejudice against anything that could be considered a “business mentality”. They also felt that since staff were so busy, few had the time to act as mentors.

Most importantly, the students highlighted a number of steps which the voluntary sector can take to successfully recruit the next generation of employees.

- *Be aware of the desires of graduates:* Recent graduates need to find a job in a relatively short period of time after graduation, to know their skills are needed, to have opportunities for promotion and to be paid a decent salary in order to deal with student debt.
- *Invest in outreach opportunities:* This could include the creation of internship or volunteer positions or getting more involved in job fairs, recruiting campaigns and student events. This kind of outreach can start as early as elementary school.
- *Dispel misconceptions about the voluntary sector:* Some students had false beliefs about the sector, thinking that there is only unpaid work or that the sector is only for “tree hugging, sandal wearing, granola eating activists”.
- *Emphasize job satisfaction and the potential to make a difference:* This is especially important for management graduates who may be interested in making a high salary. And since they will not be focused on making a financial profit, it is important to ensure that they can connect their work to tangible results.
- *Offer additional perks:* Even though salaries may be relatively low compared to the private sector, offering additional perks as well as traditional benefit packages may help to entice young people. This could include free parking, gym memberships, travel and professional development opportunities.
- *Partner with university and college career centres:* Working with post-secondary institutions can offer opportunities to promote the sector in general and to advertise specific positions.
- *Encourage young people already working in the sector to act as unofficial ambassadors:* Happily employed young people in the sector may be the best advertisement for new recruits. So along with focusing on recruiting young people, make sure you invest time and resources in the young people you already have.

Overall, students expressed a mix of emotions about their work in the voluntary sector. While they felt excited about the potential to make a difference and to use their skills, they also felt frustrated by the fact that they are not always able to effect change. This frustration stands in the way of their choosing a career path in the voluntary sector. However, listening to the advice of these students will help to recruit and keep more young people as managers of volunteer resources.

This article summarizes information from two reports from CEI: “Attracting the Next Generation of Voluntary Sector Leaders: Learning from the CEI Experience.” These reports are available online through the HR Council for the Voluntary & Non-Profit Sector at <http://www.hrcouncil.ca/hr-toolkit/diversity-generational.cfm>.

Lesley Abraham is a member of the CJVRM editorial committee.

“ROOTING” FOR INTERGENERATIONAL VOLUNTEERING

by Kirsten Keil-Mehlenbacher

When I was asked if I would be interested in volunteering with my daughter, Kaycie, for a program called “Roots of Empathy” I regarded it simply as an opportunity for me – a first time parent home for a year on maternity leave – to do something fun with Kaycie that would allow me to practice what I preach as a manager of volunteer programs. I had been working in the field for many years, and my family and friends have come to know my love for volunteers and voluntary organizations. Little did I realize that this program would not only afford me the opportunity I was seeking, but that it would also allow me to experience intergenerational volunteering as a volunteer... who also happens to be a volunteer management practitioner.

Roots of Empathy is “an evidence-based classroom program that has shown dramatic effect in reducing levels of aggression among school children by raising social/emotional competence and increasing empathy”. The very nature of the program is intergenerational by design. An infant and parent are assigned to an elementary school classroom and visit the class approximately once a month over the school year. A Roots of Empathy instructor facilitates the program and visits the classroom before, during and after the infant visit each month and coaches the students to track the baby’s development and discuss the baby’s feelings. The Roots of Empathy program labels the infant the “teacher” and through the instructor and parent, the infant is essentially

used as a tool to help students become more effective at understanding their feelings and those of others, and less likely to hurt others through bullying. Hence, the instructor, the parent, the infant, the classroom teacher and the students work together to create “roots of empathy” in the students.

My experience was extremely positive. As a manager of volunteer programs, I am aware of the perceived and documented benefits of intergenerational volunteering. However, as I stood at the front of the classroom (tears flowing down my cheeks, I should add) on our final classroom visit, I was privileged to experience these benefits firsthand rather than read about them in a study. I believe that the Roots of Empathy program demonstrated benefits of intergenerational volunteering for both the program itself and for the community in general.

In terms of the Roots of Empathy program, intergenerational volunteering was most clearly beneficial in three ways. First, it ensured the contribution of different perspectives (students, adults, infant), which created a more comprehensive learning experience for all involved. Second, there was evidence that this structure may secure future volunteers for the program. One of the students commented that she hoped she could be a Roots of Empathy parent like me when she grows up. Third, this program has the potential to strengthen bonds between parents and infants. I found that compared to spending time with my daughter at playgroups where the interaction was with other parents and infants, volunteering with children of a relatively older age gave me more valuable insight into Kaycie’s development, and left me feeling more fully bonded with her.

The Roots of Empathy program also demonstrated how intergenerational volunteering is valuable for the community in general. First, although the intention of the program is to foster empathy in youth for their peers, I found I developed empathy for the youth, and the youth developed empathy for me and parents in general. Letters that the students wrote to me had comments like “Now I know babies are hard work” and “I’m glad you came to our class even when you were tired and having a hard day with Kaycie.” I believe that this is not only due to program design, but also a result of volunteering and spending time together. Second, the intergenerational volunteering in this program fostered a voluntary spirit in a few of the students. Some were particularly interested to know that I would come to their classroom without compensation, and I would submit that the brief discussion we had about my own volunteering would at least prompt them to consider it themselves.

I observed one noteworthy challenge. With different aged participants in the

program came different and competing interests. The facilitator had to be rigidly consistent about keeping the discussion on track and related to the teaching points for each visit, or else the discussion quickly dissolved into story after story from the students about topics that were often unrelated to the teaching points. To be fair, they were always about babies, and to be honest, I have seen the same thing happen in a room of adults! The point being, however, that some planning was needed to address competing interests from all involved.

In summary, my experience reflected what I have read about intergenerational volunteering, and it was particularly rewarding to be able to experience both the benefits and challenges firsthand. The Roots of Empathy program has developed a structure that nurtures intergenerational volunteering, and I was pleased to have been a part of it.

Kirsten Keil-Mehlenbacher is Manager of Volunteer Programs at the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation – Ontario Region. She is a member of the Toronto Association for Volunteer Administration and has completed a Masters in Environmental Studies with a focus on organizational environments and non-profits.

MEDIA REVIEW

WHO CARES? THE GRAFF-REED CONVERSATIONS: WWW.CANADAWHOCARES.CA

by Faiza Kanji

Champions of the voluntary sector, Linda Graff and Paul Reed are seeking out Canadians who care to take action today to ensure the social safety net of all Canadians tomorrow.

Through a six-part series of conversations available online as mp3 files, Graff and Reed draw on research from the Nonprofit Sector Knowledge Base Project to describe trends that point to a decline in volunteerism in Canada today. This provides the basis of concern over where volunteerism is likely headed due to a population that is aging, declining in rural areas and growing in urban centres, as well as a shift towards the weakening of Canadian values around caring and civic engagement. Transcripts of the audio files are also available on the website.

Judy Maddren of CBC World Report introduces listeners and readers to Graff, Reed and the question of caring in part one. She challenges Canadians to become engaged, engage others and take action.

In part two, empirical evidence on which Graff's and Reed's concerns are based is presented. These are evident in patterns that indicate a decline in community participation, civic engagement and caring about volunteering and communities.

Part three, entitled "A Fragile Workplace", highlights the changing trends of the volunteer workforce. Numerous strong arguments are made that point towards a declining volunteer base. For example, a larger number of volunteers are giving smaller amounts of time while a smaller group of volunteers are offering the largest amounts of time but who may soon be leaving the volunteer workforce. Another example is the difficulty organizations face in attracting leadership volunteers to serve as board members and provide strategic direction. Also prevalent is the lack of influence of religious affiliation on volunteering today. It is easy to see through these and many other current trends why Graff and Reed are sounding the alarm.

The fourth conversation, "Expect An Impact On Your Life", touches on why Canada should care. Graff and Reed provide real examples of how volunteers' attitudes of connectivity and caring for communities impacts social issues and make a measurable difference on the quality of life for all Canadians.

In the fifth conversation, entitled "It's Fixable", Graff and Reed have hope for Canada yet. Canadians are encouraged to engage in dialogue that acknowledges the diversity and plurality of today's volunteers. Organizations are called upon to demonstrate flexibility in rethinking volunteer roles. Graff comments on the damage that is done to the idea of volunteering when it is positioned as mandated or punitive instead of being a valued, respected, necessary and cherished part of Canadian life. The listener is challenged to rethink a volunteer's gift of time as a currency or commodity and value it as such. Canadians, governments, the private sector – all of us who are affected by volunteerism – are encouraged to collaborate for systemic strategic planning and advocacy for the future of volunteering.

Graff and Reed end their final conversation by calling caring Canadians to action through a regeneration of volunteering where rewarding and meaningful work is shared with volunteers. It must be acknowledged that volunteerism today is not purely altruistic. Volunteers are looking to employ their skills, gain new skills, meet new people, contribute in meaningful ways and make an impact that they can see. Connectivity of volunteers to an agency's mission and outcomes will be key in their engagement and retention.

Canadians have been engaged through the conversations of Graff and Reed. Some believe that they are painting too grim a picture, seeing the glass half

empty and are much too alarmed and concerned about a country that has always embraced a culture of giving and participating. Graff and Reed's conversations are honest. They provide a hopeful outlook with smart, simple suggestions that all point toward a caring Canada in the future. Canadians simply need to acknowledge that the sector is changing, embrace the need for a change in our values around volunteering, respond today and take action to revitalize volunteers and volunteering for tomorrow.

Faiza Kanji is Manager of Volunteer Services at Surrey Place Centre in Toronto. She is an active member of CAVR, AVA Liaison for PAVR-O and Program Chairperson of the Toronto Association for Volunteer Administrators (TAVA). Faiza is also a member of the Next Steps Working Group for the Strengthening Voluntarism in Ontario initiative and is the Regional Representative to CJVRM in Toronto.

PEER EXPERT

Question: "One of our long-serving volunteers has been falling behind in her responsibilities. She does not seem to recognize or acknowledge the signs of her progressing dementia. How can we best support this individual, while ensuring the safety of all volunteers, clients and staff and also respecting her ongoing commitment to our agency?"

Response from Rosemary Byrne:

A volunteer who has given long service to your agency deserves kindness and discretion. Simple disciplinary measures which might show that the volunteer can no longer perform their assigned task would be effective in ridding you of the volunteer, but inappropriate in this situation. It would be a cruel approach. Although your principal duty is towards the clients of your organization, you also have a moral duty to care for your volunteers, even as they fail.

Be careful how you approach the issue. The volunteer knows better than anyone that things are spiraling out of control. They may become defensive, ornery or, worse still, they may deny that there is anything wrong. A soft approach will probably work best. Arrange to meet them alone, behind closed doors. You might begin by asking them how things are going with their volunteer assignment. Allow them a lot of time to answer. If they bring up any sort of change, problem or concern, try not to appear too quick to agree. An experienced geriatrician explained to me that this interview is meant to coax the individual into disclosing something which is extremely frightening to them, so calmness and patience go a long way.

If the volunteer is willing to disclose how they are feeling, ask if they have noticed any changes. You could address their confusion indirectly by questioning them about their health. Ask them if they have been well lately. Let them talk about how this has made them feel, helping them explore their emotions. Ask if they might like a little time off. Call it a temporary leave of absence and suggest that maybe a rest would do them good. This is often a wonderful face saver for both parties. The “leave” becomes their graceful exit. It is a good idea to invite them to the next volunteer appreciation event, as a way of honouring their commitment.

Can you approach the family? Only with the volunteer’s permission should you contact a family member. Choose your words carefully. As a manager of volunteer resources, you cannot pretend to have the competence to diagnose a medical problem. How you approach the family is determined by how frank the volunteer has been with you. Family members who are close will have the same concerns as you, but amplified. They may have considered it a good sign that their parent or partner or sibling was still able to continue their volunteer activities. Discontinuing their volunteer service would signify another loss for their significant other and the end of a stage in their life. Your kindness and discretion are key in helping the family realize and accept that volunteer work is no longer an option.

Rosemary Byrne is the Chief of Volunteer Resources at St. Mary's Hospital Centre in Montreal. She is President of the Réseau de l'Action bénévole du Québec and Vice-Chair of the Board of Volunteer Canada. Rosemary is also Montreal's Regional Representative to the Canadian Journal of Volunteer Resources Management.

Response from Joan Ryan:

Long-term volunteers are becoming less and less the norm. However, we still have volunteers from the “old school” who have been volunteering for organizations for many years. What do we do when we see these volunteers becoming less able to perform their duties as they age? Is that beloved “book lady” losing her eyesight or perhaps not able to walk as well? Is she exhibiting short-term memory loss? How can we help ease her into “retirement” without hurting her feelings? The solutions are varied and must be customized or personalized to that volunteer.

I am recalling one such volunteer, a very determined and independent lady, who did an assignment that involved a lot of paperwork. She began to lose her eyesight. She worked as part of a team, so the team was able to take over the more difficult tasks for her. Partnering a younger or new volunteer for the older

person to mentor is an excellent way of passing along some of the expertise the volunteer has and giving that person added confidence in knowing that she is still valued and can still contribute to the organization. This solution may also work very well for a volunteer experiencing signs of early dementia, as long-term memories are often still sharp. Take a good look at your organization. Are there any tasks that could be performed in the volunteer’s home? Perhaps someone could bring work to them and return to pick it up when ready. A good example of such a task is preparing birthday cards for clients, donors or other volunteers.

Whatever the solution, the time will come when the volunteer needs to retire. Some will be aware of their limitations and may just announce that they are ready to retire. Others may not show up for some time. We need to keep in touch with them so that they do not feel forgotten even though leaving was their decision. If necessary, it may be time to tell the volunteer that it is time to go. This will be difficult but a clean break could be kinder in the long run.

I am also wrestling with another knotty problem regarding long-term and aging volunteers. Many of our volunteers are couples and sometimes one is unable to continue while the other is. This may be transitioned by a change in assignment for the still able partner. However, I also have a volunteer who hints from time to time that perhaps he should retire. This is tricky. We cannot say, “yes, you should.” That would undervalue his contributions to the program. So, we gently point out that the decision to retire is entirely his and when he is ready he should do what is best for him. As was heard some years ago among a group of church ladies, “We retire from the workforce at 65. At what age do we retire from volunteering?” A good question that does not have a definite answer. As long as a person needs to help out, has value to the organization and is not a danger to themselves or others, they should determine that “golden” age for themselves.

Joan Ryan has been managing the Nanaimo Lifeline Program, and its volunteer resources, for 20 years. She is a member of AVRBC (Administrators of Volunteer Resources, BC) and CAVR (Canadian Administrators of Volunteer Resources), through which she is certified. Joan is looking forward to retiring in the next few years but hopes to continue as a consultant in the field of volunteer management while spending more time with her grandchildren.

CJVRM'S REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

In our last issue, we introduced you to the volunteers who make up the Editorial Team for the Canadian Journal of Volunteer Resources Management (CJVRM). This team receives tremendous support from another group of volunteers, who joined us in 2007 to help build CJVRM's capacity to reflect our profession at the national level. Our Regional Representatives are tasked with promoting the Journal within their communities and networks and with finding stories from the field to include in upcoming issues. Each of these energetic and committed managers of volunteer resources has encouraged their colleagues to contribute to CJVRM and has also written articles of their own.

Rosemary Byrne, a native Montrealer, has been involved in the voluntary sector in Quebec for over 30 years. Presently the Chef du service des bénévoles at the Centre hospitalier de St. Mary in Montreal, Rosemary had her first formal volunteer experience as a candy striper in the same hospital while in high school. She is the newly elected President of the Réseau de l'action bénévole du Québec, which regroups 16 sectors of voluntary action throughout Quebec, representing hundreds of thousands of volunteers. Rosemary was the president of the Community Council on Volunteerism, a post she held for 5 years. This Council is a resource for training and networking for professionals working in the field of volunteer management within the English-speaking community of Quebec. Rosemary is the Vice-Chair of the Board of Volunteer Canada.

From a very young age, Faiza Kanji's parents instilled in her and her brothers a strong sense of volunteerism. They, as immigrants to Canada over 35 years ago, made a successful transition into Canadian life with the help of many kind and generous volunteers. A volunteer herself from a very young age, Faiza has successfully managed volunteers at the Aga Khan Foundation Canada (AKFC), Youth Employment Service (YES), the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation (CBCF) and currently as Manager of Volunteer Services at Surrey Place Centre in Toronto. Faiza is also Program Chair of the Toronto Association for Volunteer Administration (TAVA), member and volunteer of PAVR-O and a member of CAVR. Faiza believes strongly that a community with a sound sense of volunteerism and a committed volunteer base improves the overall quality of life and health of all its members.

Charlene Robson currently works at St. Paul's Hospital in downtown Vancouver. Charlene completed the Certificate in Volunteer Management at Vancouver Community College in 1993 and is certified in Volunteer Administration by CCVA in the United States and is also certified through CAVR. She is a graduate of Simon Fraser University. She is one of the instructors of the Introduction to Volunteer Management Course held by Volunteer Richmond and she is Past President of the Administrators of Volunteer Resources of BC. When Charlene is not working, she plays the fiddle with the Vancouver Fiddle Orchestra.

Tammy Stadt, a Community Health Worker with the Barrie Community Health Centre has been working on engaging marginalized individuals into volunteering, advocating and decision making within her organization and community for over 12 years. Through her work, she has been advocating for the recognition of the importance of volunteerism in health care and the need for adequate resources. She is currently working on building on current volunteer surveys to measure the determinants of health outcomes for volunteers. Tammy received her CAVR certification this year and is a member of CAVR, PAVR-O and the Barrie Association of Volunteer Administrators, her local AVA.

We are very grateful to our Regional Representatives for enriching the Journal through their knowledge, experience and impressive professional and community networks. CJVRM is always striving to share stories and learning from managers of volunteer resources throughout Canada. If you are interested in helping us to connect with your region, please send an email to contact@cjvrm.org.

JOURNAL OF VOLUNTEER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Editorial Process and Guidelines for Authors

Objective

The Journal of Volunteer Resources Management is intended:

1. to serve as a credible source of information on the management of volunteers in Canada;
2. to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and to encourage networking among managers of volunteers;
3. to provide a professional development tool for managers of volunteers;
4. to recognize and encourage Canadian talent in the field of management of volunteers;
5. to include in each issue at least two articles that will consider different views on a specific and predetermined theme.

Target Audience

The Journal's intended audience includes managers of volunteers, educators, media and funders of not-for-profit organizations across the country.

Submissions

All manuscripts will be accepted on diskette or via e-mail in either Microsoft Word or Word Perfect. Submissions should be written according to "Canadian Style - A Guide to Writing and Editing" - Secretary of State, Dundurn Press. External reviewers may be engaged to review content if deemed advisable by the committee.

The revised draft is edited for clarity and consistency by the Editorial Team.

The edited version is returned to the author for acceptance along with an approval form for signature.

The signed form is to be returned to the Editorial Team within a week along with any suggestions for final revisions.

Format and Style

Authors are asked to respect the following word counts:

	Words	Pages
Lead Article	1000	5-6
Secondary Article	700-800	2-3
Book Review	150	1

The lead article will look at the topic in some depth and will normally require the author to conduct research into current trends and perspectives on the subject.

The secondary article will adopt a more practical approach, including personal experiences and opinions.

Advertising

Limited advertising space will be allowed in the Journal, for materials of direct relevance to managers of volunteer service, and as long as it conforms to the guidelines set out by the Editorial Team.

Guidelines:

1. Only ¼ page and ½ page ads will be accepted.
2. Ad must be camera-ready.
3. A maximum of one page of ads will be permitted per issue.
4. Job ads are not recommended.
5. Cost is to be determined by the Editorial Team.

LOOKING AHEAD

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DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSIONS & THEMES

Issue	Deadline	Theme
Volume 16.3	articles due end of September 2008	Technology
Volume 17.1	articles due end of December 2008	The Economy and Volunteerism
Volume 17.2	articles due end of March 2009	Volunteers in Sports and Leisure
Volume 17.3	articles due end of September 2009	Boomer Volunteer Engagement