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POSITIONING OUR PROFESSION

POSITIONNEMENT DE NOTRE PROFESSION

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## EDITORIAL

The federal government has recently announced the elimination of funding for the Canada Volunteerism Initiative. Professional associations for managers of volunteer resources are reporting declining membership across the country. Community colleges in Ontario and Alberta are suspending programs of study in volunteer resources management. It is a critical time for us all to consider the state of our profession and its value to our organizations, to our communities and to the social fabric of our country.

In this issue, Magda Rigo challenges us to 'get it right' by understanding the cultures within which we work and using this knowledge to communicate our value as key leaders in advancing the missions of our organizations. Rosemary Byrne and Romy Litwin also call us to action, reminding us that we have been exploring the need to position our profession for decades and that the solution must come forward in a united voice. There are tools available to advance this cause. Donna Carter presents here the updated Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement, now consolidated with CAVR's Standards of Practice. Lee Rose's article introduces us to the new HR Council for the Voluntary Sector, an important resource for paid staff working in the not-for-profit arena. Chris Harwood reminds us of the value of formal education for managers of volunteer resources and encourages us to support these post-secondary programs. Eric Saunter and Allison Caird explore new mechanisms to strengthen the voluntary sector in Ontario. Finally, Karen Howe brings it home by outlining how we, as individuals, can position our profession on a daily basis through ongoing dialogue with our colleagues.

We have the tools, the passion and the commitment to demonstrate the value of our work. We each bear a responsibility to ensure that our leaders recognize the need for a profession dedicated to managing the spirit, skills, generosity and energy of volunteers who, in turn, build better communities.

Rachel Stoparczyk  
Editorial Team

# GETTING IT RIGHT

by Magda Rigo

## Introduction

Smart organizations are dependent upon key leaders to develop, implement and monitor the ongoing provision of client services and programs. In the not-for-profit sector, one of the key leadership positions has been a manager or coordinator of volunteer resources. To be respected as managers of volunteer resources, we need to understand the culture in which we work. Why? Because if we understand the culture, we can impact and reverse some of the negative influences on our services.

Managers of volunteer resources also need to be cognizant of the need to have a clear and compelling vision for our role. The key focus of the vision needs to emphasize the aspiration to be recognized as a leader, both with the volunteers we lead and as part of the larger leadership team in our organization. Our leadership abilities help other key leaders operate more effectively and hence, advance the mission of our organization.

## The Awakening

*“If you don’t understand the culture of the company, even your most brilliant strategies will fail. Your vision will be resisted, plans won’t get executed properly, and all kinds of things will start going wrong.”* (Issy Sharp, CEO, Four Seasons, Toronto Star, August 27, 2006)

WOW! Does this sound like your reality?

How many of us even understand what an organization is or what culture is?

How many of us truly understand the culture of our organizations?

How many of us know how to reduce resistance to our plans?

An organization is the people who work together to carry out the goals of the organization –‘not them or it but us.’<sup>1</sup> The key words to focus on are people, work together and goals. Many times when we talk about organizations we talk about the building, programs and services. We rarely focus on the people who need to work together to achieve our goals. The people list should be all inclusive: the Manager of Volunteer Resources, other key leaders and volunteers. We have to think in terms of ‘us not them.’

Organizational culture is described as the glue that holds an organization together through a sharing of patterns and meaning. It consists of the values, beliefs and expectations of how things are done and is taught/ experienced by new members to the organization. The culture of an organization is largely invisible but has a profound impact on how people are treated and perceived.<sup>2</sup>

To begin the process of understanding our culture in relation to our role and the role of volunteers, you need to examine a number of areas.

First and foremost look at the physical layout of your building and the location of your office. What office – right?

In addition to where you are physically located, aim to determine the accepted behaviours in your organization. Behaviour is a critical part of the culture. These behaviours are related to rituals, traditions, communication patterns, ceremonies, conflict resolution and recognition. If you are not aware of these elements in action then, as Issy Sharp has stated, “all kinds of things will start going wrong”.

## Have things gone wrong?

Managers of volunteer resources are not new to the landscape of the not-for-profit sector. As early as the 1960s, agencies were employing staff to integrate volunteers as part of the team. This development was the result of the recognition that ‘human capital’, to be effectively utilized, required specialized skills/knowledge.

Due to the complexity of our work and the level of expertise required to ensure a safe environment for clients, staff and volunteers, one would think that our evolution as key leaders would be solidified. However, the evidence paints a different picture. The issues facing leaders in our field continue to be articulated, studied and written about in journals and newsletters. Things have gone wrong!

One thing that has gone wrong is that there exists varying degrees of understanding in organizations as to the value added by the manager of volunteer resources. Some staff still believe that our role is to recruit, orient and train volunteers. None of us would disagree that these elements of volunteer integration/support underpin our job descriptions. However, our real value added is demonstrated by our ability to provide leadership in the effective and efficient utilization of community resources (volunteers) who, in turn, supplement the services provided by salaried staff.

Another thing that has gone wrong is that there is not a shared vision for the role of the manager of volunteer resources. Consequently, people in the organization are left to decide for themselves what we should or should not be involved in at the corporate level.

As a manager, it is important for you to think about and draft your vision for your department. If you do not have a clear or succinct statement of your preferred future, how then can you expect other leaders in your organization to understand your role? For many of us in the field, our vision for our profession is to be recognized as a leader in the field of volunteer integration and as a critical part of the leadership team. Working collaboratively with all departments and volunteers, we support the vision and strategic priorities of our organization. If these thoughts resonate for you, feel free to use them to develop your vision and share it with other leaders in your organization.

What exactly does being recognized entail? Recognition is an awareness of your physical presence, i.e. do people know what you look like? More importantly it is the acknowledgement of team members that you have specific skills to offer.

### **The Challenge: Avoiding resistance and being recognized as leaders**

By understanding the factors which contribute to positioning ourselves as part of the key leadership team within our organization, we can then take the appropriate steps to enhance our image and position. Positioning ourselves is not for personal gain but for the betterment of the organization. Be clear on the value added you bring to the organization. The focus should always be on our leadership abilities, and thus, our ability to help the organization meet its strategic imperatives. We have to forge positive working relationships, stay abreast of risk management issues and continue to integrate volunteers into the organization. The following are specific strategies to enhance your credibility in your organization.

- Understand your organization and the culture that drives your organization? Do you know what your organization believes to be true about volunteers and your role? In great organizations there is a belief that volunteers are a critical part of the team and that they are consequently entitled to meaningful tasks, leadership, support and recognition. When you dig deeper, you can actually observe behaviours (culture) that support those beliefs. You will see that there is space allocated for volunteer integration functions. The space is easily accessible to prospective volunteers and staff requiring support.

The manager of volunteer resources, and by extension, volunteers, have access to have communications. They are integrated into the fabric of the organization by being included in ceremonies, reward opportunities, team meetings and celebrations. It is not just lip service; staff really do live their beliefs!

Impacting the culture is a major step in moving forward as a critical part of the leadership team. All other efforts will be for naught if everyone in the organization is not exhibiting the same behaviours vis-à-vis your role and the role of volunteers. Your 'plans won't be executed properly'.

- Look for opportunities to share your knowledge. Every profession has areas of expertise which they share within the organization. The purpose of sharing this knowledge is to contribute to the viability and sustainability of the organization. Managers of volunteer resources are trained in the areas of strategic planning, customer service, conflict resolution, strategic partnerships, risk management and human resources planning. All of these areas drive our business and guide our leaders in making the right decisions. Questions to ask yourself: Am I current? Do I know what the specific issues are for my organization in each of these areas and have I shared my thoughts with the right people? If not, develop a plan to do so.
- Look for opportunities to toot your own horn, NOT blow your own horn. Whether we like it or not the reality is that in order to be recognized in our organization we need to open our mouths. We have been socialized to believe

that it is improper to share our accomplishments. However, to be recognized as leaders, we need to become comfortable sharing the positive stories. "Tooting is short and inoffensive: blowing is exaggerated crowing. Tooting subtly, quietly promotes goals, values and respect. Tooting informs others of your accomplishments while expressing pleasure in your work."<sup>2</sup> Each day presents us with opportunities to apply our leadership skills and thus avert issues. The stories we choose to share should tie directly to the mission, vision or strategic directions of our organization. Be selective as to what you share and focus on themes that are important to your senior leaders.

- Gain new insights by interacting regularly with team members outside your immediate circle. Be visible. Ask for input as to how your department can work more collaboratively with them to support their efforts. These conversations will position you to be more proactive in planning for volunteer resources within your organization. The general feeling amongst managers of volunteer resources is that we are not made aware of new programs/services until the end of the planning process. By scheduling or purposefully interacting with these team members we advocate for our volunteers, our role and the organization as a whole. It is time well spent and it is as much part of our job as it is to recruit, orient, train and recognize volunteers.

### **Getting things right**

By understanding organizational culture, we as leaders can begin to have a positive impact on the future of our department. Rather than being victims of our situation due to a lack of understanding of our role and lack of a shared vision we can create a bright future. That future can hold great possibilities if we can create a vision for our role and have it accepted and understood throughout the organization. Then, and only then, can we fix those things which create resistance in our organization. Then and only then do we become part of the key leadership team.

Martin Luther King shouted "I have a dream" and by doing so started a movement that has changed our world. I too have a dream: that we get it right! That we move beyond our present state and have the courage to change the culture within our organizations so that all our brilliant strategies will be accepted and implemented.

### **References**

1. Conway, Sandra, Organizational Development, Markham Stouffville Hospital various sources ( Shein, 1985, Burke & Litwin, 1989)
2. Solomon, Muriel (1993). Getting Praised Raised and Recognized. Prentice Hall, N.J. p 64-65

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## ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS – SUPPORTING VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

by Donna Carter

Canadian Administrators of Volunteer Resources (CAVR) is a national organization that promotes the professional administration of volunteer resources through established standards of practice, a code of ethics and certification for the membership. CAVR collaborates with provincial, national and international organizations to support and enhance volunteer resource management in Canada. Committees of the CAVR Board structure are responsible for each area of the association's objectives.

Business, government and nonprofit organizations alike are having to be more accountable for their actions in order to attract public support, obtain ongoing funding or profit, sustain a positive customer/client base and to maintain their human resources and volunteer involvement. Managers of volunteer resources must be able to answer questions and provide documentation that supports accountability. The Standards of Practice, Code of Ethics and Certification process for members are tools developed and maintained to assist managers in their role. This information will assist in 'positioning our profession' within our workplaces and communities.

CAVR Standards of Practice (2002) outline the functions in the volunteer management process defining what a perfect program would look like. Each standard is supported by detailed practices that can be built into strategic and operational planning. By measuring a program's compliance against these national standards and detailed practices a manager of volunteer resources is able to:

- demonstrate a commitment to quality;
- increase the department's credibility;
- look at all aspects of a volunteer program;
- provide an objective evaluation;
- demonstrate accountability and
- drive change and innovation.

### **A Partnership developed to enhance the use of the Standards of Practice**

Volunteer Canada is a national organization engaged in the promotion of volunteerism across Canada, striving to ensure that the efforts of volunteers are promoted, recognized, supported and safeguarded. Volunteer Canada and CAVR have collaborated on a number of initiatives over the years and in January 2005 embarked on a new partnership to consolidate the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement (Volunteer Canada 2002) and the CAVR Standards of Practice (CAVR 2002). The result is a revised Canadian Code for Volunteer

Involvement that integrates elements of the original code with the Standards of Practice of CAVR. The revised edition of the Code is now available on the Volunteer Canada and CAVR websites. Training will be scheduled across Canada in the coming months to ensure organizations understand and utilize this valuable resource.

The revised Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement includes twelve organizational standards, which provide the basis to which all organizations should aspire. CAVR will update their Standards of Practice to include these newly revised standards.

1. **Mission-based Approach** - The board of directors, leadership volunteers and staff acknowledge and support the vital role of volunteers in achieving the organization's purpose and mission.
2. **Human Resources** - Volunteers are welcomed and treated as valued and integral members of the organization's human resources team. The organization has a planned approach for volunteer involvement that includes linking volunteers to the achievement of the mission, providing the appropriate human and financial resources to support the volunteer program and establishing policies for effective management.
3. **Program Planning and Policies** - Policies and procedures are adopted by the organization to provide a framework that defines and supports the involvement of volunteers.
4. **Program Administration** - The organization has a clearly designated individual, with appropriate qualifications, responsible for the volunteer program.
5. **Volunteer Assignments** - Volunteer assignments address the mission or purpose of the organization and involve volunteers in meaningful ways that reflect the abilities, needs and backgrounds of the volunteer and the organization.
6. **Recruitment** - Volunteer recruitment incorporates internal and external strategies to reach out and involve a diverse volunteer base.
7. **Screening** - A clearly communicated screening process is adopted and consistently applied by the organization.
8. **Orientation and Training** - Each volunteer is provided with an orientation to the organization, its policies and practices, including the rights and responsibilities of volunteers. Each volunteer receives training customized to the volunteer assignment and the individual needs of the volunteer.
9. **Supervision** - Volunteers receive a level of supervision appropriate to the task and are provided with regular opportunities to give and receive feedback.
10. **Recognition** - The contributions of volunteers are consistently acknowledged with formal and informal methods of recognition.
11. **Record Management** - Standardized documentation and records management practices are followed and in line with relevant legislation.

**12. Evaluation** - The impact and contribution of volunteers and the volunteer program are continually evaluated to ensure that the needs of the organization are being met in fulfilling its mandate.

Listed are some ways that you can incorporate the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement and Organizational Standards into your daily work. These will send a strong message to your organization, volunteers, staff, funders and the community that you are a leader and a professional and that programs you manage are essential and credible.

Use the Code as:

- a common reference, a benchmark for the profession;
- a form of self-assessment and self-regulation, by evaluating compliance with the standards;
- an opportunity to share best practices with colleagues;
- a tool to create awareness and educate others in your organization about sound practices in the management of volunteer resources;

Incorporate the Organizational Standards:

- into strategic planning, management reports, funding requests, annual reports, quality assurance and accreditation;
- as a basis for highlighting successes and identifying areas for improvement;
- to provide background when advocating for additional resources;

Use the CAVR Code of Ethics to facilitate sound decision making. Post the Standards and Code of Ethics in your office, on displays or on your website. And finally, ask the board or management committee to pass a motion..."In the professional management of volunteer resources 'Organization name' adheres to the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement, Organizational Standards and the ethical values as outlined in the Dimensions of Ethical Conduct."

For more information on upcoming training for the revised Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement and use of the Organizational Standards refer to Volunteer Canada at [www.volunteer.ca/resource](http://www.volunteer.ca/resource) and Canadian Administrators of Volunteer Resources at [www.cavr.org](http://www.cavr.org).

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## THE HR COUNCIL FOR THE VOLUNTARY/NON-PROFIT SECTOR: PROVIDING LEADERSHIP ON ISSUES RELATED TO PAID EMPLOYMENT IN THE VOLUNTARY AND NOT-FOR-PROFIT SECTOR

by Lee Rose

Have you ever received a blank or confused look from people when you tell them what you do for a living? Did you feel like you had to convince someone that yes, you have a real job and that working for a not-for-profit organization does not necessarily make you a volunteer? While you may find yourself on the defensive at dinner parties, take comfort in knowing that you are not alone.

Across Canada, there are 1.2 million people working in more than 68,000 voluntary and not-for-profit organizations. Together, they represent 7.2% of the country's total paid workforce and their collective salaries add up to an annual payroll of \$22 billion. <sup>1</sup> To put things in perspective, paid employees in the sector outnumber the total workforce of the provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador. They also outnumber employees in the construction, mining and oil and gas industries combined.

No other sector of the Canadian economy is as diverse and multi-faceted as the voluntary and not-for-profit sector. Organizations vary in size, focus and reach, from small local frontline service providers to large umbrella organizations that manage national programs. In this era of project-based funding, many not-for-profits do not have the resources, whether human or capital, to dedicate to Human Resources (HR) issues without impacting vital frontline programs and services.

In order to address the need for leadership on HR issues in the sector, the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy and Canadian Policy Research Networks first pursued the idea of creating an HR Council for the not-for-profit sector in 1998. In 2002, Community Foundations of Canada (CFC) and United Way of Canada – Centraide Canada (UWC-CC) worked collaboratively on Developing Human Resources in the Voluntary Sector (HRVS), a study aimed at providing the sector with practical HR tools and information. CFC and UWC-CC then jointly explored the feasibility of a national HR Council for the Voluntary Sector. The advisory committee completing the study heard from organizations throughout the sector that human resources needed sustained attention so that not-for-profit organizations and the people who work for them can better meet their missions and achieve their goals. The study confirmed widespread interest in collaborative

action to address issues related to the paid labour force, leading to the creation of the HR Council for the Voluntary/Non-profit Sector in October 2005.

By design, HR Councils bring employers, employees and other key stakeholders from a sector together to address its particular HR issues. There are 30 national HR Councils that serve sectors ranging from the automotive and construction industries to policing and childcare. In the not-for-profit sector, the HR Council's work relates to employees and employers in organizations that:

- employ paid staff;
- are self-governing and have a Board of Directors who are volunteers;
- do not distribute profits to members or shareholders;
- have activities extending beyond the organization's membership to serve a broader public (not cooperatives, business and professional associations or labour unions);
- are not large, publicly funded institutions (hospitals, colleges, universities).

As the new home of HRVS, the HR Council is committed to providing these types of organizations access to practical tools and information on human resources management specifically designed for the not-for-profit sector. Through its website, [www.hrcouncil.ca](http://www.hrcouncil.ca), people can find information on a variety of HR related topics including compensation, recruitment and training. The HR Council also distributes a bi-weekly e-news bulletin featuring HR tips and hot topics that are relevant to organizations in the not-for-profit sector. HR Perspectives, the HR Council's newsletter, provides updates on research and projects that are underway and highlights innovative HR practices from not-for-profit organizations across the country.

In addition, the HR Council conducts research and takes action on priority labour force issues on behalf of the sector. The HR Council is playing a key role in building and sharing knowledge about the sector's paid labour force—knowledge that you can not only use as you review your organization's HR strategy, but also arm yourself with as you prepare to introduce yourself to people at future dinner parties.

1 Cornerstones of Community: Highlights of the National Survey of Non-profit and Voluntary Organizations, Ottawa: Minister of Industry. Revised version, June 2005. Statistics Canada catalogue no. 61-533-XIE.

*Lee Rose is the Communications Manager for the HR Council for the Non-profit/Voluntary Sector. He is an active volunteer with a number of organizations including United Way / Centraide Ottawa.*

## AN ARGUMENT FOR FORMAL EDUCATION

by Chris Harwood

It has been said that volunteers are Canada's greatest resource. Like any resource sector, volunteerism needs support, investment and strategic development. If an organization is to have an effective partnership with its volunteers, it must harness the interests and fulfill the needs of volunteers. To do this an organization needs to have a strong, professionally trained manager of volunteer resources.

Community colleges traditionally offer formal education, usually leading to a certificate. Managers of volunteer resources recognize their need for professional skills in order to develop, implement and promote their programs. Formal education gives them the opportunity to do just this. It allows them to connect with and learn from experts in the field; not just the theory, but also practical solutions to the challenges they are likely to face. Educators have strong ties with the field and usually take on their teaching commitments while continuing to be employed in the not-for-profit sector. It is often their passion that leads them to share their knowledge and practical experience.

The roles and responsibilities of a manager of volunteer resources are diverse. A thorough knowledge of strategic and operational planning results in the development of appropriate programs for the agency and its volunteers. Methodical needs assessments, well-delineated position descriptions, creative recruitment strategies, a thorough screening process, effective volunteer training, placement and supervision all help to ensure that risks are expertly managed. Open communication, meticulous record keeping and an integrated approach to program evaluation are the everyday tools used to manage resources. Program managers or managers of volunteer resources also train and act as a resource to other staff that supervise volunteers. A high level of training is needed to be effective in these roles. It is not easy to acquire these skills in the course of day-to-day experiences.

Employers regularly report evidence of the benefits observed after their employees have taken the Management of Volunteer Resources certificate program. In Ottawa, many positions require candidates to have a certificate.

*"Three years later, I still consult my notes and course materials for information. I also have a list of my peers (those people that attended classes in the last couple of years) to ask them for help when I need it."*

Former Student, Algonquin College

Volunteers become an ever more important resource as the non-profit sector is pressed to take on more responsibilities with less funding. In addition to the many social benefits that volunteers contribute they also provide an incredible economic benefit. However, they present challenges as well as benefits. Recognizing the different motivations of volunteers and providing meaningful recognition are two of the main differences between managing volunteers and paid staff. While their service is unpaid, it is not 'free'. Above all, managers need access to formal education that helps them to do their job to the best of their ability. There is no room for ineffectiveness or inefficiency.

Volunteers are becoming increasingly selective about the amount of time they contribute and the type of work they do. Volunteers want to gain new skills and job contacts in an organization that values their skills and qualities and provides beneficial support and supervision. In other words, they want to volunteer with an organization that acknowledges the value of their contributions. The organization can do this, in part, by employing a manager of volunteer resources or a program manager who is trained to work with volunteers. Organizational policies and practices that support volunteers help an organization to provide services and show recognition for the contributions made by those volunteers.

Volunteer Centres often offer introductory courses, professional development and training for boards. The United Way, local professional associations, Professional Administrators of Volunteer Resources-Ontario (PAVR-O) provincial conferences and Canadian Administrators of Volunteer Resources (CAVR) national conferences provide professional development. While these agencies provide advocacy for the profession and occasions for growth, they cannot be expected to also provide the comprehensive foundational training needed to be effective in all aspects of volunteer management. Colleges repeat their programs annually so training is timely, comprehensive and local. This allows other associations to offer professional development on current issues and specific topics.

PAVR-O is working with colleges to provide a standardized curriculum. However, over the last year college programs have closed or been suspended due to falling enrolment. When the program was suspended at Algonquin College in Ottawa the college reported overwhelming encouragement for the continuation of the program. The college recognized that without formal education and qualifications managers of volunteer resources would not have access to the toolkit they need to fulfill their roles.

Formal training has its role front and centre. It needs to follow adult learning principles, which means practical courses need to be provided so that students can take the information learned and use it immediately in their workplace.

Training needs to be responsive to the needs of the local community. It needs to be innovative with its ideas and approaches. It needs to promote evolving best practices. Time and funds need to be allocated to create a program that is attractive to the target population. Colleges need to consult with employers to ascertain whether to offer the course during working hours, in the evening or on the weekend. Programs could be a combination of on-line, distance education and in-class work. Advisory groups should help college staff ensure that the course content remains relevant. Collaborating with local volunteer centres, professional associations and groups representing the diverse volunteer programs in an area such as the chamber of voluntary organizations, is a key component. Whatever the format, opportunities for formal education must be made available if society is to benefit fully from the desire of volunteers to commit to providing services.

Employers need to recognize the importance of formal training no matter whether they are employing a manager of volunteer resources or someone who has volunteer management as a function of their job, including people who supervise remote site volunteers. The management of volunteer resources is often a piece of many other programs. Anyone who supervises volunteers benefits from formal training. The skills taught are specific to volunteer management but they are also generic management skills and can be transferred to other jobs. The benefits are considerable and worth the cost of the programs; in fact they pay for themselves. Would you expect any other professional to hold a management position without training in the core functions of that position? Is it enough to have human resource management experience? What makes volunteer management different?

Colleges offering volunteer management programs must be willing to promote them. While it may seem a very straightforward thing to do, accessing a college website to find the volunteer management program can be an issue. It is also important to list the program under Human Resources as well as Volunteer Management. While we may prefer to call it the Management of Volunteer Resources people looking for information will usually look under 'volunteer' rather than 'management'.

As government financial support decreases and it becomes more difficult to get funding from other sources, it becomes increasingly important to have volunteers involved in fundraising and service delivery. The management of those volunteers has to be professional. Lack of management skills can damage the reputation of the agency. It can lead to problems with clients, funders and the recruitment and retention of volunteers. Insurance companies in the United States are starting to require a certified professional manager of volunteer resources be employed by the agency before providing liability insurance for the



volunteers. This trend will continue and no doubt it will be the way of doing business in the future.

At the moment 77% of all formal volunteer work in this country is undertaken by only 11% of the population. In the future, managers will need to take advantage of 'baby boomers' who have led full and active lives and are now ready to put something back into the community (almost eight million of them by 2026). With funding cuts to many important social programs, agencies will need to rely on these volunteers together with corporate volunteers. Managers of volunteer resources need training in communication and marketing strategies to work with local communities and businesses to attract new volunteers. Canadians are looking for a work-life balance. One way employers can support their employees is by providing corporate volunteering opportunities.

Executive directors need to see the benefits of staff that can take on this role and yet have transferable skills that they can take into other positions. Many people find themselves managing volunteers although it had not been identified as their career goal. Once they start, they realize there is more to it than they thought. They begin looking for formal education programs to support them to be successful in their work. Students who have completed formal training report that they have benefited in a personal and professional capacity and that by extension their employers have also benefited. Managers of volunteer resources need to be proactive in encouraging not only their own but also other agencies to fund training.

*"I was able to directly apply my knowledge and my skills to become a more effective manager of volunteer resources and I think that many agencies have greatly benefited from graduates of this program. I have moved on from volunteer resource manager to a different management position but I am still applying what I learned through this program. The staff who taught me were excellent instructors and facilitators."*

Former Student, Algonquin College

Please consider these issues and promote management of volunteer resources certificate programs in your region.

*Chris Harwood was the Coordinator for the Management of Volunteer Resources certificate program at Algonquin College, Ottawa from 2002 – 2006. She has extensive experience developing training and is a dynamic workshop facilitator. She may be reached at [chrisharwood@rogers.com](mailto:chrisharwood@rogers.com)*

## UNITED WE STAND.... WELL, IN ONTARIO WE'RE MOVING IN THAT DIRECTION

by Eric Saunter and Alison Caird

There is an exciting new infrastructure and sector engagement project underway in Ontario. The 'Strengthening Voluntarism in Ontario: Collective Action on Common Issues' project (SVO) is a strategic partnership initiative between a consortium of over 20 non-profit, volunteer driven organizations. A few sector champions that met to consider the development of a formal provincial collaboration mechanism and strategy for the sector initiated the undertaking. Interest in the concept grew to the point that a diverse and dedicated group of organizations got together, and after a series of meetings, prepared a plan to undertake a larger discussion across the province. Last spring, the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration's (MCI) Voluntary Sector Relations Unit contributed funding for this initiative.

The 16-month SVO project seeks to bring the non-profit, voluntary sector together to work collaboratively to champion meaningful change and action in support of common issues. The ambitious work plan aims to accomplish three goals:

1. Identify a Provincial Mechanism: to explore options and make recommendations to support the development of a strong, inclusive and collective umbrella organization for the non-profit, voluntary sector that reflects issues of common concerns and has the capacity to address shared needs.
2. Define and Share Best Practices for Working Differently to Work Better: to identify effective approaches to working better together in order to strategically address organizational and operational needs of non-profit, voluntary organizations, including an exploration of regional models and best practices.
3. Engage the Sector: to effectively dialogue with the non-profit, voluntary sector about the relevance, value and nature of the above mechanisms and models.

To reach the above three goals, the SVO Steering Committee has formed four workgroups which include:

1. Environmental Scan and Research Paper: to analyze existing models for suitability in Ontario;
2. Strategic Think Tank Forum: to invite sector leaders to offer insight and lend their support;
3. Sector Engagement and Communications: to raise awareness about the benefits of collective action and seeking input about which model would best appear to serve their needs;

4. Voluntary Symposium VI: to convene a large gathering to review the project findings and move toward a consensus on the implementation of a collective umbrella organization.

### Research Paper Findings

The SVO Steering Committee is reviewing the draft of the study and the final report will be available in January on the SVO website currently under development. The research paper prepared by the Centre for Voluntary Sector Research and Development suggests a number of best fit models for the non-profit, voluntary sector to review and debate. This foundation document will be employed in the development of the Think Tank and Communications strategies.

### How is this relevant to me?

The SVO's Environmental Scan Research states, "There is enormous value that a leadership/voice organization could bring to the sector in Ontario." 1 (p 30). This statement is built on the belief that the adopted mechanism identified by the 'Strengthening Voluntarism in Ontario' project would result in sector wide collective action on common issues.

The project has a broad mandate encompassing the entire sector, from the professional administrator's perspective. However, the province needs a strong umbrella group to assist the profession in moving forward by creating a well-funded organization to potentially:

- propel the need for and increase participation in certification;
- expand educational opportunities including the development of a university level degree;
- drive provincial focused research and strategic planning;
- raise the profile and appreciation of the value of the profession.

### And so what are you going to do about it?

Attempts in the past to create and maintain a collaborative mechanism for the sector in Ontario have failed for several reasons. Why? One of the most significant shortcomings was related to a lack of wide-spread support and interaction within the sector.

As professional administrators, we all are busy with competing demands on our time; however, a little bit of investment on everyone's part now in this project will change conditions in the sector for the better. If we create a strong and sustainable provincial body it would be able to engage in some of those things that we do not have time to do. If as a profession we want this, then we need to support it now. The Professional Administrators of Volunteer Resources Ontario

(PAVR-O) is actively participating in the project with the most significant contribution being to co-chair the SVO steering committee.

### You can make a difference by:

Action on a Personal Level: Choices are being made and you need to add your voice to the discussion. Become informed about the various options being considered for a provincial mechanism. Make your voice heard by participating in and providing feedback to, SVO surveys and focus groups being announced in January of 2007 and by attending the Voluntarism Symposium VI in the spring of 2007. Together we can make this the best fit for the sector in Ontario.

Inform and Advocate at an Organizational Level: You know your organization better than anyone else. Inform your supervisors and governing bodies that this project is underway. Extend the invitation to your organization, on behalf of the steering committee, to provide feedback on a provincial mechanism and voluntary sector strategy. For individuals and organizations not in Ontario the Steering Committee also welcomes your input by suggesting models or lessons learned.

### In Summary

"Every system is perfectly designed to get the results it gets."

Donald M. Berwick, MD, MPP, FRCP, Institute for Healthcare Improvement

If we look around the province of Ontario at those groups that have a strong and professional image such as the Ontario Teachers' Federation or the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, we need to ask ourselves, is this what we want? Do we want an organization driven by the sector that works for the sector.... a mechanism that we own? Do we want a strong, inclusive voice addressing the Ontario Government, the private sector and media or will we remain caught up in a cycle of irresolvable sustainability issues and finger pointing at everyone else who we think should be advocating on behalf of the sector? There is a basic, inalienable truth to 'united we stand.' We need you. Together we can do this.

Alison Caird and Eric Saunter are Co-Chairs on the Strengthening Voluntarism in Ontario Steering Committee

*Alison Caird is the Manager, Volunteer Resources for Toronto Rehabilitation Institute. Alison is certified as an administrator of volunteers and was recipient of the Linda Buchanan Award – Administrator of the Year 2004 by PAVR-O. She has been a proud and involved volunteer with numerous organizations for over 27 years and a professional administrator for 18. Alison is Director of Strategic Alliances for PAVR-O.*

*Eric Saunter is a retired educator who has supported community based volunteer groups since 1996 including associations developing the Trans-Canada Trail. Currently under contract with the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC) he coordinates training, recruiting and recognition activities for 242 volunteer driven incorporated snowmobile clubs across Ontario.*

## THE STRUGGLE TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY

by Rosemary Byrne and Romy Litwin

We belong to the Community Council on Volunteerism (CCV), a collective of managers of volunteer resources of 25 English-speaking organizations in Montreal that meets six times a year for networking and peer-led professional development. Between us, we have accrued almost three-quarters of a century of volunteer and volunteer management experience. One of us is a 'boomer', a professional manager who worked initially in the community sector. The other is a 'gen x-er', a young professional who through volunteer work became a professional manager. According to Kunreuther, our diverse life experiences should colour the ways we see the world and heed the calls for volunteerism, leadership and community services very differently.<sup>1</sup> Yet, we both struggle with a strikingly similar challenge: how to be taken seriously as volunteers, managers and experts by our volunteers and by our professional colleagues outside our field of expertise.

Over the years, CCV has discussed and addressed the growing number of complex factors contributing to an amplified reliance on volunteers across sectors, including government offloading, an increasing dependency ratio, mandated community service and institutional poverty. In spite of the current Canadian political landscape and despite worrisome diminished involvement, volunteers are progressively more important in the day-to-day functioning of our organizations. <sup>2</sup> As a result, we often find ourselves competing with colleagues for the same resource, the committed, available, trainable, accountable and reliable volunteer.

The creation and adoption of the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement as well as the Canadian Administrators of Volunteer Resources' (CAVR) Standards of Practice across the country have empowered managers of volunteer resources to develop fluency in the 'MBA language' of our financial, material management and human resources colleagues. Concurrently, Quarter, Mook and Richmond have developed a model and a series of comprehensive tools to calculate the value-added of volunteerism to an organization's financial bottom line. <sup>3</sup> What we see is a trend towards the professionalization not only of

volunteer resource management, but also of the volunteers themselves, who now expect appropriate screening, training, supervision and evaluation.

Our professional associations' cries for uniformity and standards continue to be met with resistance; we still struggle to be recognized as professionals. Why have we not seen changes in the organization's positioning of volunteerism? Ironically, it was in 1978 when Patty Bouse first wrote about this same challenge and found "the pace of acceptance [to be] excruciatingly slow". <sup>4</sup> Fast-forward thirty years to some observations from a 2005 survey of 1,203 managers of volunteer resources:

- 84% of respondents were female;
- only 22% earned \$40,000 or more per year although seven in ten had managerial job titles;
- less than half worked full-time;
- 36% reported that their organization did not set aside any budget for their volunteer program.<sup>5</sup>

Why have we not seen changes in the organization's positioning of volunteerism? It seems that, although the profession has evolved, managers of volunteer resources are still drawn to the profession for the same reason as volunteers: to give back, to help, to be a part of something bigger and to connect with others. Do we see ourselves as managers of human resources or care providers/facilitators? Do we align ourselves more closely to the words of Maya Angelou, "If you find it in your heart to care for someone else, you will have succeeded" or to those of Aristotle, "We are what we repeatedly do"? If we recognize ourselves more in the former, how do we learn to see ourselves as managers? If we do not, neither will anyone else.

The answer lies somewhere in the middle, between ourselves and our milieu. We must admit that we have not found our full voice. When a manager of volunteer resources is needed, how often is the job given to a volunteer from the program, with or without the proper qualifications? We are all so nice that we are far more likely to help the person out than protest their hiring! When a paid manager of volunteer resources' position is abolished and a volunteer agrees to take on the job, do we protest? When a full-time managers' position is down-graded to part-time, do we voice concern? When a public institution lowers the educational requirements of the manager of volunteer resources in order to lower the salary, do we do anything besides wince a little? The answer to each of these questions is a resounding "no". Each of these actions erodes the positioning of our profession. Would nurses allow the hiring of non-nurses? Would physiotherapists allow the hiring of non-physiotherapists? Never. We need a professional order working for our interests. We need to be a little less



to change and creativity with the volunteer program. Be the resource for fun, support and guidance. Remember NO is not a 4 letter word and accept it from staff and volunteers when possible. Develop relationships, build alliances, collaborate and have fun!

Be an active, connected, creative, valuable member of your organization. Credit the efforts of the volunteers and staff but make sure to identify your role in that success, whether it is the idea, the process, the experience or the outcome. Find your own voice to tell your story and do not leave the positioning piece just to your annual review. Be as proud of the work you do as you are of the efforts of your volunteers and make sure the right people know.

*Karen Howe, CAVR, Manager of Volunteer Services, Vancouver Aquarium, 2nd VP CAVR, Board Member-BC Network-CVI, Board Member Volunteer BC, Trainer-Volunteer Vancouver, Past President- AVRBC.*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – VOLUNTEERING AND MANDATORY COMMUNITY SERVICE: CHOICE – INCENTIVE – COERCION – OBLIGATION. EXPLORING THE THEME

by Linda Graff

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This is an in-depth exploration of the connection between mandatory community service and volunteering. Mandatory community service is mandatory unpaid (or paid less than the prevailing wage) work undertaken in the community, usually to benefit the community in general or specific members of the community other than those performing the service. It is the compulsory nature of mandatory services that is of greatest interest here.

There is a remarkably diverse range of other programs and formats through which individuals can become involved in community activities. Mandatory community service in Canada is the focus of this discussion, although brief reference is made to mandatory community service models in other countries.

Some mandatory community service programs, (e.g., workfare, court-mandated community service and mandatory community service in schools) involve significant penalties for those who fail to meet service requirements. Some community service is not strictly mandatory, but entails effective “coercion” to achieve involvement. In still other forms of community service, money or other

compelling material incentives are offered to entice participation. Mandatory community service is spreading rapidly, and new forms are evolving continually.

The 2000 National Survey on Giving, Volunteering and Participating reported that 8% of Canadian volunteers said that they were required to do so by their school, their employer or as part of the terms of a community service order (Lasby, 2004, p.10). It is likely that the percentage of Canadians reporting some form of requirement or coercion influencing participation would be much higher if other forms of mandatory community service and more – rather than less-coerced forms of engagement were explicitly investigated.

Mandatory community service may be the most important new trend in volunteering. It is contended that it will have an impact as great as episodic volunteering has had over the last decade (McCurley and Ellis, 2002b). It may transform how citizens connect and associate, and how we build and sustain community life. Little research has been conducted on mandatory community service in Canada despite its quiet but potentially transforming growth through the taken-for-granted realm of volunteering and community involvement.

As the non-profit sector struggles to meet increasing demands with decreasing resources, volunteerism has become extremely important (Foster and Meihard, 2000: Advisory Board on the Voluntary Sector, 1997). However, expected shifts in the volunteer labour pool raise serious doubts about the ongoing capacity of volunteerism to help fill gaps left by government downloading of services. A disproportionately small segment of the Canadian population is responsible for a disproportionately large portion of the volunteer participation (Reed and Selbee, 2001), and the aging of both the “civic core” and the baby boom volunteers, the two generations who have build and sustained the non-profit sector over the last three decades, is expected to seriously erode volunteer capacity in this country over the next decade. The ongoing availability of volunteers cannot be taken for granted.

The current rise in mandatory community service carries a potentially huge impact on the nature and magnitude of the volunteer and unpaid labour force in this country and therefore warrants in-depth research and careful monitoring.

Careless terminology which obscures the distinction between volunteering and mandatory community service creates the potential to influence future volunteering behaviour and cause long-term harm to volunteerism. At present, no empirical data exist on the potential for mandatory community service programs to alter attitudes and perceptions about community in general, and volunteering in particular. Mandatory and other forms of community service demand immediate attention.

The concepts of volunteering and mandatory community service are introduced and briefly distinguished from one another. A review of the evolving definitions of key terms such as “volunteering,” “volunteer” and “volunteerism” is presented. While no consensus exists about the definition of volunteering, there is wide agreement that work must be unpaid, relatively un-coerced and primarily for the benefit of others to qualify as volunteering.

The relationship between volunteering and mandatory community service is explored in some detail. A wide range of community service forms and programs is plotted along a continuum, and each is briefly profiled. The mandatory forms of community service, by definition, involve compulsion from a source of power outside of the person required to perform the work. Punishment and/or the denial of important rights and/or benefits are the consequence for those who fail to meet service requirements. Of the wide variety of ways that citizens can become engaged in community activities, it is clear that mandatory community service is the furthest of all from volunteering.

How people understand the world is not absolute. Meaning is derived from interaction in the world., and language is one of the most important conveyors of meaning. This is the reason why the prevailing disregard for the fundamental differences between mandatory community service and volunteering, and the associated propensity to use the term “volunteering” is in connection with mandatory community service is important. The careless blurring of the distinction between volunteering and mandatory community service may pose a significant risk to the long-term well-being and availability of volunteer resources in Canada.

Little is known about mandatory community service and its potential to influence voluntary behaviour. Key questions and concerns are identified about mandatory community service and other forms of community service, and about their relationship to volunteering. Areas for further exploration and research are suggested.

A lengthy list of references and further readings is provided.

*Linda Graff has been working and consulting in the nonprofit sector since 1980. She is a voluntary sector and risk management specialist, an impassioned advocate for the field of volunteer program management, and a dynamic and in-demand international trainer. Linda's full report, "Volunteering and Community Service: Choice – Incentive - Coercion – Obligation. Exploring the Theme" is available for download at [www.volunteer.ca](http://www.volunteer.ca).*

## ITEMS OF INTEREST

<http://www.hrcouncil.ca>

[http://www.volunteer.ca/volunteer/pdf/VMS\\_report.pdf](http://www.volunteer.ca/volunteer/pdf/VMS_report.pdf) ('Managers of Volunteers, A Profile of the Profession' 2004 Canadian research study)

[www.valuesadded.ca](http://www.valuesadded.ca) (the impact of Canada's charities and nonprofits)

<http://www.volunteer.ca/volcan/eng/content/vol-management/declarations.php> (Universal declaration on the profession of leading and managing volunteers).

## HELP BUILD YOUR JOURNAL!

The Canadian Journal of Volunteer Resources Management (CJVRM) is currently seeking Regional Representatives from across Canada. We are also looking for individuals in the National Capital Region to join our Ottawa-based Editorial Team.

CJVRM Regional Representatives are volunteers who will assist the Editorial Team in determining themes for our monthly issues, by soliciting articles from within their geographic region and by promoting the Journal through regional networks. We would like your assistance to help ensure a truly national publication.

The Editorial Team is a group of volunteers which meets monthly to review and edit submissions and to administer CJVRM affairs.

For more information or to express your interest in either position, please send an email to [contact\\_cjvrm@yahoo.ca](mailto:contact_cjvrm@yahoo.ca).

# 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
<b>Lead Article</b>	1000	5-6
<b>Secondary Article</b>	700-800	2-3
<b>Book Review</b>	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

**April 15 - 21st, 2007**  
National Volunteer Week

**May 1 - 3rd, 2007**  
PAVR-O Conference  
Toronto, Ontario

**June 10 - 12th, 2007**  
CAVR - ACRB Conference 2007  
Winnipeg, Manitoba

## DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSIONS & THEMES

Issue	Deadline	Theme
Volume 15.1	articles due on the 31st of January	Risky Business
Volume 15.2	articles due on the 31st of March	International Volunteering
Volume 15.3	articles due on the 31st of May	Dollars and Sense
Volume 15.4	articles due on the 30th of September	Managing Conflict