



2009

Community Report on Volunteering



A Community Report on Volunteering

Accomplishments
AmeriCorps Program Volunteer Outreach
Nevada Volunteers Network
Future Focus

Prepared by
Nevada Volunteers
May, 2009

Why Volunteering?

Research indicates that a populace that engages in volunteering has an increased level of social capital, an important gauge for safety, health, and well-being in a community. (Putnam, 2000) People who regularly engage in volunteer activities are also healthier and happier. (Stephen Post, 2007) Young people who participate in service or volunteering engage in fewer at-risk behaviors and have better attendance and achievement in school than peers who do not. Further, they tend to be more engaged citizens over their lifetime. (Leveling the Path to Participation: Volunteering and Civic Engagement Among Youth from Disadvantaged Circumstances, March 2007) Volunteer services address significant needs in the areas of human services, environmental guardianship, public safety, and health issues. Whether “counted” or not, we know that the spirit and generosity expressed through volunteering is a building block for healthy people and healthy communities.

The Launch of a Volunteer Initiative

In January, 2008 Nevada Volunteers convened the first Nevada Summit on Volunteerism to focus attention on the important role that volunteerism plays in strengthening our state. The Summit was the embarking point of a new volunteer initiative designed to support volunteer efforts across the state and to increase access of the general public to volunteer opportunities.

Based on the feedback generated from over 80 participants representing 53 agencies and organizations attending the Summit, Nevada Volunteers launched the volunteer initiative, driving one-time funding toward improving and enhancing volunteer efforts across the state with a commitment to find continued funding to sustain the initiative.

Nevada Volunteers was well poised to manage this statewide effort, in part because of its long history as the Governor’s Commission for National and Community Service to administer AmeriCorps programs. Nevada Volunteer’s AmeriCorps programs have focused the direct service of AmeriCorps members toward meeting local needs, but have also engaged other volunteers to join them in those efforts. As a result, we have a strong history of recruiting, engaging, and recognizing volunteers—both our own AmeriCorps members and community volunteers.

In 2007-2008, we had 139 AmeriCorps members serving in all 17 counties of Nevada. These members in turn recruited 4,142 volunteers to help them. Each of these volunteers gave an average of over 6 hours of help. What difference did this make? We cannot name the difference in any one person’s experience, but we can say that over 21,500 Nevadans were given clothing and food as a result of these efforts. We know that 721 homeless veterans were provided support services resulting in 88% of them remaining in a stable residency situation for at least one year.

These are examples of the service provided by AmeriCorps—one small segment of the multitude of volunteer activities going on in Nevada.

Beyond AmeriCorps, however, the state needed to focus attention on increasing support for the traditional volunteer sector—the many nonprofits that rely on volunteers to reach their goals, the faith-based entities where the bulk of volunteering and service occurs, the many governmental agencies who rely on citizen participation to support our democratic processes, and the civically-minded businesses who encourage employees to give back to their community.

With that audience in mind, Nevada Volunteers volunteer initiative goals were to:

- ❖ Increase access to volunteer opportunities by establishing a statewide electronic volunteer matching system that any nonprofit or governmental agency could use to post volunteer opportunities and that any citizen could use to access information about volunteering;
- ❖ Provide opportunities for volunteer leaders to receive volunteer management training;
- ❖ Increase and enhance communication among key stakeholders to support and learn from each other and to achieve common goals;
- ❖ Enhance the capacity of nonprofits to effectively use volunteers to meet community needs;
- ❖ Measure the impact of volunteers in Nevada;
- ❖ Increase resources available to volunteer infrastructure development.

In the past year and a half, Nevada Volunteers has hired a volunteer development manager who has spearheaded this effort along with AmeriCorps*VISTA members who have been instrumental in our success and accomplishment.

As a direct result of this initiative, Nevada Volunteers has received funding in the amount of \$252,000 to support outreach and communications for the volunteer initiative, including specific funding to engage higher education students in service-learning. In addition the AmeriCorps*VISTA project was expanded from 2 VISTAs to 7 VISTAs for 2009-2010.

Nevada Volunteers launched a new website in January of 2009 containing informational resources related to volunteers, volunteer managers, AmeriCorps, and youth service. The website is the base for the electronic volunteer matching system. In the three months, January through March of 2009, the number of new nonprofits that registered to post volunteer opportunities nearly tripled from 19 in first quarter 2008 to 45 in first quarter 2009. The VolunteerMatch system recorded 385 opportunities posted statewide in first quarter 2009 and over 1400 people registering for volunteer opportunities.

Fourteen organizations have formalized a partnership with Nevada Volunteers, forming the *Nevada Volunteers Network*. These partners have agreed to use our web-based system for recruiting volunteers, to identify Nevada Volunteers as a partner, and to participate with us in providing feedback about the system and its effectiveness.

The website has allowed us to create a list-serv enabling over 80 people to share information, questions, and ideas related to volunteering and service. Our website calendar provides information about community volunteer events, training opportunities, workshops, and conferences. The press and news section showcases events, legislation, resources, and activities. In addition, we have the capacity to reach over 370 people through e-blasts and our Nevada

Volunteers newsletter. In addition we have a database of over 180 people who are connected with volunteering and service throughout the state.

Through presentations and activities, Nevada Volunteers has provided outreach regarding the volunteer initiative to over 75 nonprofits, 10 national service organizations, 48 governmental entities including schools, colleges, Federal programs, city government, universities, and over 85 businesses.

In partnership with DOVIA, Nevada Volunteers sponsored THE Conference for Volunteer Management in October 2008 where over 125 participants received training in volunteer management tips and best practices. In Reno, Nevada Volunteers offered a Lunch-n-Learn Series in which 35 organizations have received training in various aspects of quality volunteer management.

The Nevada Humanities awarded Nevada Volunteers funding to provide training through the national Civic Reflection Project. Nine people were trained and, as a result of the training, three civic reflection groups are being conducted. One is provided for VISTA members serving in southern Nevada, one is for individuals who are interested in skills-based volunteering during their retirement, and one is for individuals working with youth organizations. The response has been positive and several additional groups are being planned.

Moving Forward

The future growth of volunteering in Nevada rests on our continued collaboration, strengthening the access to volunteer opportunities that engage our citizens in meaningful and impactful service that enhances the lives of all Nevadans. We will continue to serve as a connecting organization in support of volunteer efforts across the state. We will continue to increase awareness of the importance and impact of volunteering, provide recognition of quality programs, increase communication among volunteer leaders and coordinators, and provide resources to enhance access to and success for those who volunteer.

Our primary focuses will be the Nevada Volunteers VolunteerMatch system and our network of partners, the higher education initiative to engage college students through service-learning, our AmeriCorps programs, creating new volunteer hubs for rural Nevada, and working to create a state plan for service with national service partners and the traditional volunteer sector.

Nevada Volunteers Network

The true success of volunteering in Nevada stems from the incredible efforts of the many organizations who engage volunteers in their work. We are proud to share the following snapshots from our partners in the *Nevada Volunteers Network* that highlight the diverse opportunities for volunteering that exist in our communities and that demonstrate the impact volunteers can make! Enjoy browsing these snapshots!

Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful (Reno)

2,658 volunteers conducted 79 Adopt-A-Spot roadside litter cleanups, completed eight Adopt-A-Park projects including planting over 5,000 flowers, collected over 9,000 Christmas Trees to be recycled and chipped for local beautification projects, and removed over 150 tons of trash through neighborhood, open space and river cleanups during Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful's 2007-2008 Fiscal Year. Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful (KTMB) is a small nonprofit with only two full-time staff people, but KTMB volunteers make a tremendous impact contributing over 6,500 volunteer hours annually.

Contact: Christi Cakiroglu 775-851-5185; Christ@beautiful.reno.nv.us

Family Promise of Las Vegas

Each year the volunteers that assist homeless families in their faith houses for Family Promise of Las Vegas provide a minimum of \$300,000 of in-kind dollars to our program. These in-kind dollars are factored in three categories: (1) the cost of the rooms per night in each of 21 faith houses, (2) the cost of the volunteer hours multiplied by \$10 per hour times 2000 volunteers; (3) the cost of the 3 meals per day donated for up to 18 people per day times 365 days per year. We have approximately 2,000 volunteers in 21 faith houses. In addition, we have a volunteer technical adviser that gives us over \$11k per year in services related to computers, and website development. The Family Promise model is driven by 95 percent volunteer staff in the community. Clark County Community Development – Shawna Parker Brody sites Family Promise of Las Vegas as one of the non-profits that leverages volunteer hours and staff in the most efficient manner.

Contact: Terry Ruth Lindemann 702-638-8806; lvihn@earthlink.net

Lend A Hand (Boulder City)

Lend A Hand is a non-profit organization supporting homebound seniors and disabled. The goal is to allow them to stay in their home as long as possible, evading nursing homes, assisted living, moving in with their families who have hectic lifestyles or even homelessness.

80% of the support is volunteer escorted transportation to medical appointments or shopping etc. We currently have 89 active volunteers, who support 345 active clients. Lend A Hand volunteers drive 5000 miles each month due to all surgeries and required on-going medical treatments are in Henderson or Las Vegas. In home services provided, also by the volunteers, are light housekeeping, light repairs, respite care, companionship, light meals, pet walking, and help with exercising per Dr. instructions. Our little City is 28% seniors and we have served over half of that population. Each month the unique client base may change, due to accidents, new treatment prescribed etc. We add an average of 5 new clients each month.

We can attribute the success of our 20 years of service to this community back to the Volunteers in the same community who offer hours of their time to help others. Last year's volunteer hours for direct service to clients was 3150, plus in-kind volunteer hours for office support, fundraising, board member time and committee's average 100 hrs per month.

Contact: Cathie Lee Alderson 702-294-2363; bclendahand@embarqmail.com

Washoe County School District – Volunteer Services

During the 2007-2008 school year, WCSD had 21,023 parent and community volunteers. Hours of volunteer time vary but considering an average of 2 hours per volunteer per week for 36 weeks of the school year (and many do much more!) the total number of hours is 1,513, 656. In specific programs, over 400 volunteers were screened and trained in the Read & Succeed intervention program and the Math Paths program. These volunteer tutors served over 800 students. In addition volunteers were used for the Children In Transition program, the AVID Program, and for office support. Over 10,000 parent and community volunteers were screened and cleared to volunteer in schools throughout the county.

Contact: Lisa-Marie Lightfoot 775-851-5655; llightfoot@washoe.k12.nv.us

ESL In-Home Program of Northern Nevada

The ESL In-Home Program provides one-on-one tutoring to help students who may be studying to become a U.S. citizen, studying for a GED certificate, learning English to enhance their ability to communicate while shopping, with medical personnel, with their children's teachers, or to enhance job skills. There have been 151 students and 85 volunteer tutors involved in the program. The ESL In-Home Program has 53 students who are now U.S. Citizens with the help of their community volunteer tutor. We now have two students who are tutoring others (to give back) as well as continuing to learn more.

Contact: Florence Phillips 775-888-2021; pfphillaway@aol.com

The Children's Cabinet at Incline Village

The Children's Cabinet at Incline Village is a private, non-profit organization providing low/no cost services to children and families living along the North Shore of Lake Tahoe. It is the mission of the Children's Cabinet to improve the quality of life for children and families through a community-wide cooperative effort between private and public sectors. We offer counseling and psychiatry services, family resources, a thrift store, an after-school Homework Help Club, and free Dental Screenings. We also have a six-week Summer Camp program that runs on Tuesdays and Thursdays and provides enriching experiences for low-income middle and elementary school students.

Volunteers play an absolutely essential role in sustaining our agency and fulfilling our mission. Children's Cabinet volunteers daily assist students with homework completion and reading at the Homework Help Club and in the Read to Succeed Program. They keep the thrift store in operation, assist with fundraisers, supervise outdoor camp activities, and help execute dental screenings. The Children's Cabinet utilizes a base of about 75 volunteers whose efforts are invaluable to both our organization and the Incline Village Community.

Contact: Julia Hays 775-298-0004 x 1201; JuliaH@cciv.org

St. Mary's Art Center

St. Mary's Art Center is housed in a historic building, formerly known as the St. Mary Louise Hospital. Built in 1876 by the Sisters of Charity and Bishop Patrick Manogue, this four story brick structure sits on five sprawling acres in the heart of the Comstock Historical District in Virginia City. St. Mary's, fondly called SMAC Art & Retreat Center, houses five galleries, fifteen sleeping rooms, two kitchens, formal dining room, a lounge, and provides facilities for regional art exhibits, community art events and offers lodging and meeting space for small groups of 6 to 45. The mission is to build upon the area's arts and cultural achievements by nurturing and supporting artists, strengthening existing cultural programs throughout the region and by introducing new ventures that will enable us to emerge as a vibrant arts destination with strong links to our unique history.

The Center actively works with volunteers, usually on a project by project basis. Projects include landscaping, exhibition installation, public relations, guest services and kids art projects.

Volunteers of all ages, interns and seniors always welcome.

Contact: Linda Nazemian 775-847-7744; smacenter@earthlink.net

The Volunteer Center of Southern Nevada

Since July 2008, the Volunteer Center of Southern Nevada has been working to promote and expand opportunities for voluntary service throughout southern Nevada. During the first ever KNPR Volunteer-a-Thon, 460 new volunteers together pledged over 11,000 hours of volunteer service to be provided over the next year. This has helped bring the Volunteer Center to 1,633 active volunteers, a 47% increase since March. We offer projects geared towards professional development and training including opportunities to acquire board service skills, disaster relief training and an ongoing volunteer leadership program. Currently the Volunteer Center offers 53 unique volunteer opportunities with hundreds of date/time slots available for participants to create positive and lasting change. The number of partner organizations to join the Volunteer Center has increased to 141, a 41% since March. The Volunteer Center offers opportunities to work providing educational outreach, tutoring at risk children and youth, helping animals in need or working with the disabled to help them reach their full potential.

The Volunteer Center has partnered with corporations like Intel, The Home Depot, NSTec, Target/NASE, JetBlue and the Nevada Bankers Association to bring opportunities to their employees where they can serve their community while fostering a sense of camaraderie and accomplishment. The Volunteer Center also brings volunteers together with projects like the National Association of Letter Carriers for the Stamp Out Hunger food drive to combat hunger, the KLAS 8 On Your Side free help fair which connects thousands of individuals and families with resources that can provide assistance to those in need, and national service projects such as Make A Difference Day each October.

Contact: Robin Kelley 702-892-2322; robink@uwsn.org

Southwest Gas

Southwest Gas and its employees volunteer together through *Blue – Building Lives Up Everywhere* to change the quality of life within Nevada communities. From refurbishing homes

to holding food drives, *Blue* – Southwest Gas’ employee volunteer program – brings smiles to hundreds of faces by sharing our time, expertise, gifts of the heart, and company contributions to support and restore hundreds of community organizations.

Contact: Kristien Tary 702-876-7253; Kristien.tary@swgas.com

Wells Fargo and Company

Wells Fargo & Company donated \$2.5 million to nonprofits and community organizations in Nevada in 2008. Team member volunteers donated more than 27,000 hours of time in 2008, rolling up their sleeves to promote financial literacy in local schools and universities and participating in over 300 volunteer events including a Habitat for Humanity build, a Rebuilding Together home renovation, community clean ups, nonprofit fundraising activities and community events throughout Nevada. In recognition for these outstanding efforts, Wells Fargo received the Governor’s Points of Light award for volunteerism in Nevada during a February, 2009, ceremony. In addition to charitable donations and volunteerism:

- In 2008, team members in Nevada raised \$450,000 during the company’s annual Community Support campaign. These donations will support a variety of local non-profit and educational organizations whose efforts help improve the quality of life for every segment of our communities.
- In 2008, Wells Fargo made \$27.7 million community development loans and investments throughout Nevada – financing affordable housing, community services and economic development.

For more on Wells Fargo’s Social Responsibility efforts: wellsfargo.com/about/csr/reports/. The Company, which is integrating the Social Responsibility programs of Wells Fargo and Wachovia, will release its next Social Responsibility report in spring 2010.

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Total volunteers mentioned in snapshots: 26,094 volunteers

Total volunteer hours mentioned in snapshots: 1,562,506 volunteer hours