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Volunteerism

State of Volunteerism
2000 Report



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The impact of volunteerism and citizen participation is tremendous. This report is designed to inform policy makers, citizens, volunteer administrators, and others of the impact of volunteer and citizen service to Minnesota's quality of life and economy. Compiled over three years, the report documents volunteer contributions and the dollar value of their time; discusses trends and challenges to the field of volunteerism; and makes recommendations for the future.

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Celebrating



Minnesota Office of Citizenship and Volunteer Services



Wolunteerism, citizen initiatives, and service continue to grow in all sectors in Minnesota. Minnesota continues to be one of the leading states in the nation in percentage of residents who volunteer. The *face* of Minnesota and its volunteers is changing as well as the definition of volunteerism — embracing more types of service and informal citizen (and non-citizen) engagement. As information was compiled over the last three years, a few trends emerged that reflect the current the state of volunteerism in Minnesota.

The number one trend heard at community meetings and received in written testimony was that **the aging population** has affected volunteerism and will continue to do so. Community residents, nonprofit programs, local and state government officials, and businesses are concerned with addressing the needs of an aging population. Volunteer efforts can be the vehicle to address these issues; however, community and volunteer program leaders must find ways of involving the *baby boom* generation as volunteers.

The second most common challenge mentioned is addressing the needs of our relatively new **diverse population of Minnesotans** and involving these new citizens as resources in our communities. No longer only a Twin Cities metro issue, residents from many Greater Minnesota communities discussed community needs of their new neighbors, particularly recent immigrants and non-English speakers. Not only has the demand for volunteer ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) tutors increased, but so has the need for other support roles to help our new neighbors be successful in their new home. There is also a tremendous need for native-born Minnesotans to recognize and support

What Affects Volunteerism in Minnesota

- **The aging population**
- **Diverse population of Minnesotans**
- **Positive Youth Development**
- **Short-term or episodic volunteering**
- **Collaboration and partnerships**
- **Increased use of technology**

the cultural differences of our new populations. So far, Minnesota's diverse populations constitute an untapped resource for formal and informal volunteer programs managed by the majority culture.

Positive youth development has continued to be a key phrase for many communities and volunteer programs and this emphasis is expanding. Through organized programs such as 4-H, the National Youth Leadership Council, the Minnesota Alliance

with Youth and Search Institute's *Healthy Communities • Healthy Youth*, people from all sectors are working *for* and *with* youth as volunteers and problem solvers. Also, as a result of an increased emphasis in school curriculum on service-learning, the role of young people in their communities has become more important and vital.

Most organized volunteer programs, including Volunteer Centers, have seen a rise in the last five years of requests by volunteers for **short-term or episodic volunteering**. With so many women entering the work force and seniors traveling and working part-time, the type of volunteering people are able to do continues to change. Many formalized volunteer programs are struggling to adapt the role of volunteers in their programs to fit this need while others have already begun the process of change.

As we listened to volunteer leaders across Minnesota, implicit in their comments was a need for **collaboration and partnerships** among public and private sector stakeholders. Minnesota has a number of role models (some mentioned in this report). Yet, many programs still need to start viewing each other as resources - not competitors for volunteers and funding. Great strides have been made in this area in the last five years, but there are many challenges yet to meet.

The **increased use of technology** was also frequently discussed as a trend that has impacted, and will continue to impact, the field of citizen participation and volunteerism. The rapid advancement of the Internet has dramatically increased the volume of information and resources available to volunteer administrators. Web sites that offer searchable databases with volunteer opportunities abound. Technical assistance and training are available 24 hours-a-day, seven days-a-week through web sites, list serves, and e-magazines. The challenge for the field of volunteerism is to more effectively tap this resource and maximize its impact.

Brett Brucker, Mike Radmer and Elaine White share their stories about service in their communities at State of Volunteerism community meetings.



Throughout this report we use the terms “volunteerism,” “service,” “citizen participation,” “citizen initiatives,” and “civic engagement” to describe the variety of work done, generally without compensation, by Minnesota residents. Although related, these terms are different and denote different types of voluntary involvement. Through civic engagement, citizen participation and citizen initiatives, the residents of Minnesota work to make a better society through grassroots action. These “Active Citizens” are community builders in their world. They work with others to shape their neighborhoods, communities and state. Volunteerism and service are the supportive actions of Minnesotans to address community problems and help those in need. Through both proactive and reactive voluntary involvement, the citizens of Minnesota not only keep the vision of a more just state, but also actively work towards achieving it.

A Change at MOCVS

In 1995 the Minnesota State Legislature changed the name of the Minnesota Office of Volunteer Services (MOVS) to the Minnesota Office of Citizenship and Volunteer Services (MOCVS). With this name change came responsibilities to increase citizen participation efforts and civic engagement. As Senator Steve Kelley, author of the bill initiating the change, said; “I am convinced that we

need to develop an alternative to solving problems by government doing things for people. Citizens and communities working together to solve local problems can be much more effective. We also need to give citizens a stronger role in governance.” Specifically, the statute (M.S. §16B.88) directs MOCVS to:



1. engage in education and other activities designed to enhance the capacity of citizens to solve problems affecting their communities;
2. promote and support efforts by citizens, community-based organizations, non-profits, churches, and local governments to collaborate in solving community problems;
3. encourage local governments to provide increased opportunities for citizen involvement in public decision making and public problem solving;
4. refer innovative approaches to encourage greater public access to and involvement in state and local government decisions to appropriate state and local government officials;
5. encourage units of state and local government to respond to citizen initiatives and ideas;



MOCVS Advisory Committee and Lieutenant Governor Mae Schunk, Co-chair of the Advisory Committee, meet at the Capitol and make recommendations for policy and programs that strengthen volunteerism and citizen engagement throughout the state.

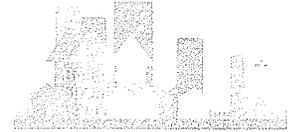
6. promote processes for involving citizens in government decisions; and
7. recognize and publicize models of effective public problem solving by citizens

Carrying out these directives depends not only on active citizens, but also on a responsive, accessible government. Brian O'Connell, in *Civil Society — The Underpinnings of American Democracy*, says, "Along with citizens' fulfilling their responsibilities to make government effective, civil society depends on government to protect and foster active citizenship and private initiative." The future work of MOCVS will focus on these principles of civic engagement that are consistent with our mission, as well as the support and technical assistance to individuals and programs that involve volunteers. This report documents many of the changes outlined above - not only in the work of MOCVS, but also in the field of service, volunteerism and citizen participation.

1995 State of Volunteerism Report Recommendations and Results

Five years ago, the Minnesota Office on Volunteer Services (MOCVS) prepared the *1995 State of Volunteerism Report* using facts and opinions gathered from surveys and questionnaires, as well as from a review of research, media coverage and public testimony. From this report recommendations were developed to direct the work of the office. The following describes these recommendations and a brief summary of related work since 1995.

A need was identified for **more accessible affordable professional development**, technical assistance and networking opportunities for volunteer administrators, particularly for those in Greater Minnesota and those from small budget and unfunded volunteer programs. MOCVS addressed this need in several ways. With other key leadership organizations, MOCVS co-sponsors the biennial statewide **Minnesota Conference on Volunteerism**. Working with volunteer leaders, MOCVS took the lead in re-organizing the annual conference structure to develop a biennial conference with



more sustainable leadership involving all sectors of the community. A system has been developed to offer smaller more localized and sector specific training during the alternate year. In addition, MOCVS co-sponsors **regional training conferences** and works with various public and private funders to make these sessions affordable or free to smaller unfunded programs. The MOCVS director travels extensively throughout Minnesota offering **customized training and networking opportunities** for volunteer administrators. To facilitate networking among professionals in the field of volunteer administration, MOCVS tracks and publishes a list of local and statewide professional volunteer directors' associations.

Two other recommendations were to **advance the role of volunteer leaders as resources in developing solutions to community needs**, particularly in working with elected officials and government programs, **and to facilitate senior, youth and family volunteering**. MOCVS has continued to focus on these areas through collaborations such as the new public-private partnership, the **Minnesota Alliance with Youth - Fulfilling America's Promise**. Housed within MOCVS, the *Alliance* has worked with over 200 Minnesota communities since its inception in 1997 to promote community based solutions to issues regarding at-risk youth. Volunteers and community leaders have joined together with schools, local government, communities of faith, nonprofits and businesses to increase the resources the community has for young people. (See page 20 for more information.) The **League of Minnesota Cities** (LMC) has been a major partner in involving local city government in the work of the *Alliance*. Through a grant from the Corporation for National Service, Minnesota received funding for 10 AmeriCorps Promise Fellows in 1999 and 2000. The fellows work with nine public and private agencies to develop resources for positive youth development. Youth and adult volunteer leaders are key resources in making this statewide movement successful.

Another recommendation was to **help citizens, policymakers, and private sector funders recognize the impact of volunteerism**. In 1995 and then annually since 1997, MOCVS has partnered with the Minnesota Planning Department's *Minnesota Milestones* project to survey Minnesotans using the annual Minnesota State Survey conducted by the University of Minnesota Center for Survey Research. MOCVS contracts with the Center to measure the rate of volunteerism in Minnesota. Using current demographic information on Minnesota's population, MOCVS produces statistical information on the rate and dollar value of volunteerism in Minnesota for the preceding year. MOCVS distributes this information through statewide press releases, MOCVS publications and publications of our many partners, as well as through community meetings, and presentations to the Minnesota State Legislature, county and local government officials, and the volunteer community.

Although great strides have been made since the *1995 State of Volunteerism Report*, there is still much work to be done, particularly in the area of developing support and visibility for volunteer programs within communities of color. This 2000 report has recommendations for the next five years to better support the contributions of Minnesota's ethnically and racially diverse population. (See page 31.)

Recommendations from 1995

- **more accessible affordable professional development**
- **regional training conferences**
- **customized training and networking**
- **advance the role of volunteer leaders as a resource in developing solutions to community needs**
- **facilitate senior, youth and family volunteering**
- **help citizens, policymakers, and private sector funders recognize the impact of volunteerism**

2000 State of Volunteerism Report

Methodology

MOCVS staff, advisory committee members, and many volunteer and community leaders began working on compiling this report in June 1997. Nine community meetings were held across Minnesota to collect information and testimony, and over 400 Minnesotans offered verbal or written stories, facts and figures. Citizens were asked to:

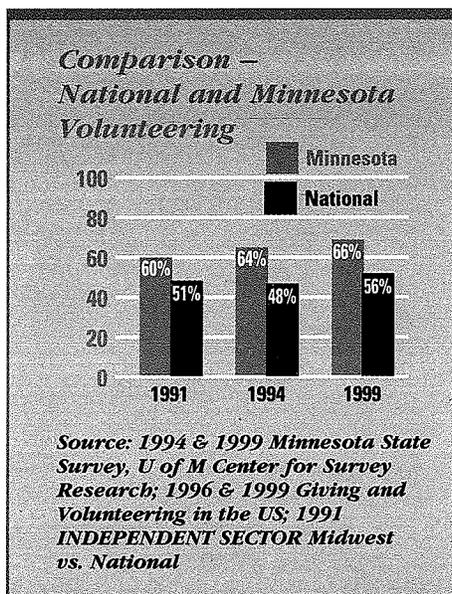
1. tell their own stories;
2. tell how volunteerism has impacted their community;
3. share the barriers they have faced and strategies used to overcome them;
4. tell what fosters and encourages volunteerism; and
5. discuss trends they see happening that will affect the field of volunteerism and citizen engagement.

The **1999 Minnesota State Survey (MSS'99)** conducted by the University of Minnesota Center for Survey Research is the basis for most of the Minnesota statistics cited in this report. A total of 802 telephone interviews were completed from September to November 1999. Selection procedures guaranteed that every telephone household in the state had an equal chance to be included, and since individuals who participated in MSS '99 were randomly selected from the population of Minnesota, the survey results can be generalized to the entire state. As in all public opinion surveys, the results are subject to some errors associated with telephone data collection, including systematic exclusion of household without telephones. More information on the survey methodology and detailed results of the survey is available through MOCVS or the University of Minnesota Center for Survey Research. Other national statistics are from Independent Sector's *Giving and Volunteering in the United States*, 1996 and 1999 editions. Information was also collected from newspapers, annual reports, surveys, written and oral testimony, personal interviews, and review of research and professional journals.

This report is designed to inform policymakers, citizens, volunteer administrators, and others who can benefit from the knowledge of the impact of volunteer and citizen service to Minnesota's quality of life and economy.

Key Findings

The impact of volunteerism and citizen participation in Minnesota is tremendous. According to the **1999 Minnesota State Survey (MSS '99)** conducted by the University of Minnesota Center for Survey Research, **66% of Minnesotans 18 years and older volunteered** time in the six months prior to the survey, which was conducted from September to November 1999. This translates into **\$6.5 billion** in service to Minnesota communities, organizations, and individuals. Minnesotans volunteer at one of the highest rates in the country, fully ten percentage points above the national average of



Adult Volunteering in Minnesota

	1994	1998
Percentage of Minnesotans		
18 years of age and older who volunteer	64%	66%
Estimated number of volunteers		
(18 years and older)	2 million	2.3 million
Average weekly hours served per volunteer	3.7 hrs/wk	3.78 hrs/wk
Annual dollar value of volunteering	\$4.8 billion	\$6.5 billion
Per hour dollar value of volunteering*	\$12.13	\$14.30

*Source: 1999 Minnesota State Survey, U of M Center for Survey Research
* Based on average non-agricultural wage, plus 12% benefits estimates*

56%. This impressive contribution of Minnesota citizens giving freely of their time is not happenstance, but a result of the infrastructure in

place in our state. High quality educational systems, sophisticated volunteer management, the social conscience of our citizenry, and contributions of strong faith-based organizations all result in Minnesota leading the country in voluntary contributions.

Minnesota women volunteer at a higher rate than men - 71% of women volunteered an average of 4 hours per week compared to 60% of men who volunteered an average of 3.3 hours. Nationally women also lead men in their rate of volunteering (62% vs. 49%), but nationally men gave slightly more time than women - 3.6 hours per week as opposed to 3.4 hours for women. The age group that volunteered the most was 35 - 44 year olds (76%), which is also significantly higher than the national average of 67% for that age group. Eighteen to 24 year olds volunteered at the lowest rate of any age group - with less than half (47.8%) volunteering. This is a decline of four percentage points since the 1998 Minnesota survey, but is consistent with the national trend where 46% of that age group reported volunteering. Older Minnesotans (65+) had the largest recent increase in volunteerism - up 10 percentage points from 52.6% in 1998 to 62.8% in 1999.

Volunteer rates vary significantly with educational levels. There is a steady climb from 52.6% for less than high school to 79.7% for college graduates. Two parent families with children were most likely to volunteer (80.4%) - over 16 percentage points higher than any other household type. Geography does not have much of an impact on volunteering - 64.7% of Twin Cities Metro area residents volunteer compared to 68.1% of Greater Minnesota residents. However, people in Greater Minnesota consistently spent more time volunteering per week than their Twin Cities' neighbors.

Where Minnesotans volunteer has not changed significantly; however certain types of volunteering had significant increases. Informal or neighborhood volunteering has taken over as the top choice in 1999 from volunteering at a faith-based organization, which was the highest rated place in 1995. Although informal volunteering was the top choice, more formalized programs had the greatest increase. Volunteering at schools increased by 10 percentage points since the 1995 survey, and social service volunteering

66% of Minnesotans 18 years and older volunteer worth \$6.5 billion in service

Women volunteer at a higher rate than men - (77% vs. 60%)

The age group that volunteered the most was 35 - 44 year olds (76%)

Two parent families with children volunteered more than any other household type (80.4%)

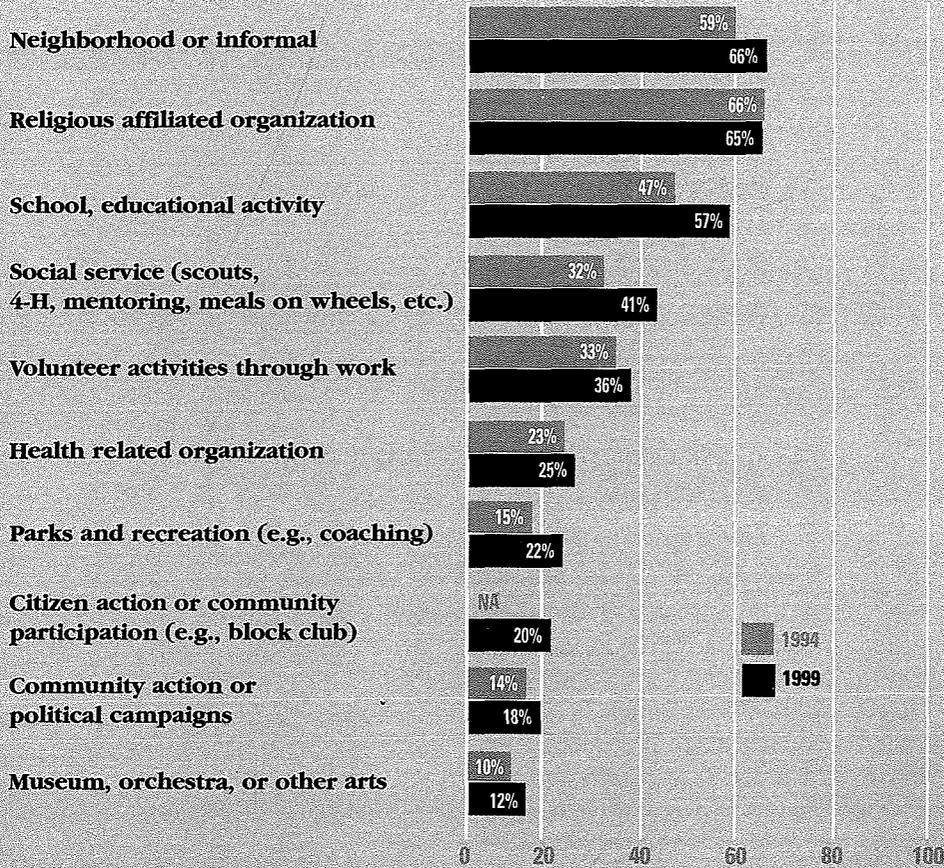
Older Minnesotans (65+) had the largest recent increase ... up 10 percentage points

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People in Greater Minnesota consistently spent more time volunteering per week than their Twin Cities' neighbors

Volunteering at schools increased by 10 percentage points

*Where Minnesotans Volunteer**



*Survey participants could choose more than one location.
 Source: 1994 & 1999 Minnesota State Survey, U of M Center for Survey Research

increased nine percentage points. In fact every category but one shows an increase since 1995, clearly indicating that **not only more Minnesotans are volunteering, but they are also volunteering in more ways.**

The story of Minnesota volunteers and citizen initiatives goes well beyond statistics and interesting changes in percentages. The real impact of service is in quality of life, increased services, and efficiency in public and private sector programs. In the spring of 1997 Minnesota experienced the worst flooding the state had seen in decades, and the next spring tornadoes devastated St. Peter and surrounding communities. Volunteers from across the state rushed to assist flood victims with sand bagging and the clean up. Within hours of the tornado, hundreds of volunteers were on the scene offering assistance to communities crushed physically and emotionally. Ask the victims of these natural disasters the value of volunteerism to Minnesota, and you will hear more than statistics and dollar value.

The benefit of volunteerism is also felt in the lives of the volunteers themselves. As we took testimony in community meetings across the state, we consistently heard volunteers relate the satisfaction they receive from giving their time and talents. As Sherry



Volunteers help with sandbagging in Fargo/Moorhead.

Ristow, from southwest Minnesota, said *"... one of the highlights of my being able to be a volunteer.. is directing kids' musicals... I can't tell you what - how wonderful it is - to be [there] .. when you have a standing-room only auditorium or church filled full of people and you have all these kids performing... where everybody stands up and claps — a standing ovation.. I can't imagine a better thing."*

The bulk of this report documents organized or formal volunteering since these efforts are tracked by organizations and can be documented. However, **informal or neighborhood volunteering was the number one way Minnesotans reported they volunteered** in the *1999 State of Minnesota Survey*. These voluntary efforts - shopping for an elderly neighbor, helping a neighborhood child with homework, shoveling someone's walk - are what build strong communities and improve our quality of life.

Volunteer Administration and Management

Part of the success of Minnesota's volunteer community belongs to the strong base of professionals that manage more than 2.3 million volunteers. Effective volunteer management is a key factor in successful volunteer programs, including high rates of recruitment, retention, and satisfaction of volunteers. A 1998 UPS-sponsored National Volunteer Survey found that two out of five volunteers stopped volunteering because of poor management practices, including "not good use of time," "not good use of talents," or "tasks not clearly defined." On the motivational side, this same study found volunteers were more likely to volunteer if the volunteer organizations "had a reputation for being well-managed," "had good use of time," or "made better use of volunteer talents." Being thanked was on the bottom of the list as a motivator.

Since 1976, when the United States Department of Labor accepted volunteer administrators as professional managers in its *Dictionary of Occupation Titles*, the field of volunteer administration has developed into a well-known and respected career. *The 1999 Minnesota Nonprofit Salary and Benefits Survey* conducted by the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits (MCN) in 1998, shows nonprofit volunteer administrators' average annual salary is \$26,465. As expected, organizations that have annual budgets greater than one million dollars pay more on average than those with budgets under one million dollars. Volunteer coordinators working for community building, volunteerism or philanthropic organizations made the most with an average annual salary of \$29,809. However, much still needs to be done to bring Volunteer Administrators' salaries to parity with responsibilities.

Minnesota has approximately 40 associations of professionals that work with volunteers in some way. These associations range from statewide incorporated nonprofit entities with by-laws, boards of directors and policies, to informal networks of a few individuals representing a common area of interest or geography that get together to share best practices and leverage limited resources. These associations are essential in helping improve volunteer administrators' efforts in volunteer recruitment, supervision, retention, recognition, risk management, and also in the areas of fund raising, effective use of technology, building collaborations, and more.

Statewide professional associations that focus on one particular sector, (e.g., the Minnesota Association of Church Volunteer Coordinators and the Corporate Volunteerism Councils mentioned in other parts of this report), serve a special need in targeting training and networking among professionals that work in the same field and face the same challenges and issues. In a recent brainstorming session, the **Minnesota Council of Directors of Health Care Volunteers** (MCDHCV) identified the following changes that have affected their field of work in the last five years:

- an increase in paperwork and documentation in order to meet regulations has decreased the time spent with volunteers.
- an increase in youth volunteers has resulted in a need for development of new policies.
- the extremely competitive employment situation has led to many seniors returning to part-time work instead of volunteering, and the same situation has led to a shortage of workers in the health care industry and therefore more requests for volunteers.
- the squeezing of the health care dollar has resulted in reduced budgets and therefore less money for volunteer services, training, and expenses.

Issues like these and more are addressed in monthly meetings, trainings and networking sessions sponsored by MCDHCV and other professional associations across Minnesota. By sharing best practices, partnering with other associations to leverage funding for training, and being proactive in addressing problems, these volunteer leaders contribute to Minnesota having among the highest rate of volunteerism in the nation.

An increase in collaborative efforts of the professional associations, Volunteer Centers, and other groups have also helped advance the field of volunteer administration. The *Minnesota Conference on Volunteerism* celebrates its 25th anniversary in the

year 2000. The 2000 conference has more sponsoring organizations than ever before. The conference has moved to a biannual schedule with smaller regional or sector training sessions during alternate years. With planning two years in advance, the quality and quantity of training available to volunteer management professionals has increased substantially.

In 1998, thanks in part to the work of the Volunteer Leadership Consortium (VLC), Hamline University initiated a *Certification of Volunteer Administration* in their Graduate School of Nonprofit Management. Although other volunteer administration certification courses have been offered in higher education institutions in Minnesota, this course is unique in that a group of volunteer leaders - experienced practitioners in the field - helped craft the curriculum and teach the courses. The work of the VLC continues with development of leadership, and advanced level curriculum that will be available to higher education institutions in the near future.

Through the leadership of the Minnesota Association of Volunteer Directors (MAVD), collaboration among the various professional associations has advanced. *Volunteer Leadership 2000* (VL2000) has started a process to help eliminate duplication and better serve volunteer coordinator members of the 40 statewide and local associations of volunteer directors. *"The vision of VL2000 is to create a new alliance to empower our members to speak with a common voice; interact out of a position of strength and unity; and create systems that support all members to be the very best they can be in their roles as professionals."*



Volunteer leaders around the state discuss priorities for the Volunteer Leadership 2000, an initiative to create a new alliance for its members to speak with a unified voice about issues impacting volunteerism.

Volunteer Centers Serve Communities, Professionals, and Volunteers

Volunteer Centers in Minnesota and surrounding states have opened, closed and merged since the 1995 State of Volunteerism Report. The largest merger came in 1999 when the two biggest Volunteer Centers in the state, Minneapolis and St. Paul, merged to become the Volunteer Resource Center of the Twin Cities. Continuing an 80-year tradition of formal volunteer service in the Twin Cities, the consolidated center will provide expanded services and resources for community members, corporate groups and nonprofit organizations. The consolidated center will make it easier for volunteers

to find the perfect opportunity, and volunteer organizations will have to contact only one Resource Center for service. The combined center now has over 8,000 volunteer opportunities at more than 1,000 community organizations.

Another merger happened in 1998 when Volunteer Connections in Rochester merged with CommunityNet. With this merger the Volunteer Center has broadened their services to make use of electronic resources. In 1999 they unveiled their new web site and now register volunteers on-line and offer opportunities for volunteers to view via their web site. They have linked with the Mayo Clinic and report "a marked increase of Mayo employees who were volunteering this past holiday season."



Minnesota has 16 active Volunteer Centers that offer volunteer services, information and referral, training, and volunteer placement to community members, business, and nonprofit organizations. Each Volunteer Center is unique and offers a variety of services based on the needs of their community and the size of their budget. Besides the two mergers described above, since the 1995 State of Volunteerism report five Volunteer Centers opened: Heart of Lakes, Alexandria; Community Connections, Red Wing; Kandiyohi County Community Volunteer Center, Willmar; and the Volunteer Center, Winona.

Within the last five years Minnesota was hit with a number of devastating natural disasters. Flooding and tornadoes crushed a number of Minnesota communities not only with property damage, but also in the spirit of community members, home and business owners. Volunteer Centers played a key role in organizing volunteer efforts to

offer assistance at this critical time. The Volunteer Center in Mankato coordinated volunteers who staffed the Disaster Welfare Inquiry telephone line for the American Red Cross handling the tornado relief in 1998. The previous April that same center recruited and placed volunteers for flood relief services in St. Peter and western Minnesota and North Dakota. The center sent hundreds of volunteers to assist with sand-bagging, staffed a food drive, and sorted and packaged boxes to be sent to the disaster areas.

Volunteer Centers also play an important role in promotion and recognition of volunteer efforts. For example, each year the **Community Volunteer Service of the St. Croix Valley** recognizes an outstanding volunteer with the *Vi Russell Award for Excellence in Volunteer Leadership*. Among the many accomplishments of their most recent winner, Larry Peterson drove over 75,000 miles transporting hundreds of Washington county residents to medical appointments!

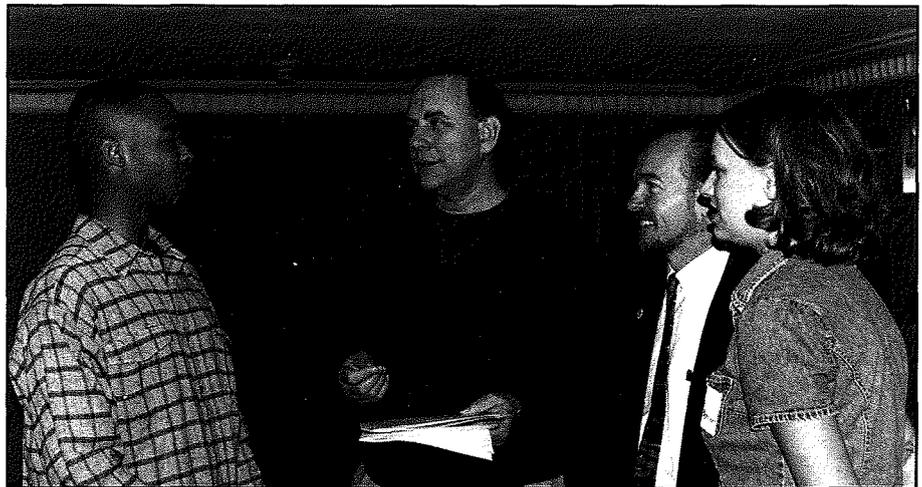
Citizen Volunteers Benefit Government Services

Government, volunteerism, and citizen service form a mutually beneficial partnership that has served Minnesota for many years, and strengthened our communities through direct service and civic engagement. Minnesotans are engaged in the work of state, county, municipal and neighborhood government in countless ways. From serving on state commissions, city councils, or neighborhood advisory boards; to cleaning highways, working in libraries, or reading to students in our public schools; the role of volunteers is essential to keep government in touch with its citizens, and to keep services running efficiently and economically.

Volunteerism, Citizenship and Local Government

Cities and other local governments provide one of the best opportunities for combining active citizenship with volunteer service. Minnesota's 854 cities, 87 counties, over 1800 townships, and 299 school districts involve citizen volunteers in everything from advisory commissions to coaching T-ball teams.

According to Kevin Frazell, Director of Member Services for the League of Minnesota Cities, most local governments rely extensively on the input of citizen commissions that advise elected officials in a variety of subject



Tangene Hayslett speaks with Representative Joe Mullery, along with Randy Dostal and Alison Behrens at the State Capital.



Governor Jesse Ventura, Lt Governor Mae Schunk, Randy Dostal, MOCVS Advisory Committee Co-Chair, and Commissioner David Fisher honor volunteer contributions.

areas. A Planning Commission is actually required by Minnesota law for any local government exercising land use control. Other commissions include Parks and Recreation, Library Boards, and Historic Preservation. Many cities and counties also have citizen advisory commissions working in the areas of human rights, public safety, and public works, as well as citizen task forces to study and make recommendations on specific projects, such as development of capital improvements. A recent and rapidly growing trend is that youth are now being actively sought out to fill seats on regular standing advisory commissions and task forces, and school boards.

The biggest investment in local government volunteer service is to serve as an elected official. In all but the very largest jurisdictions, they

receive little or no monetary compensation for their efforts. As Marlin Torgerson, the Mayor of **Hutchinson**, said at their community meeting, *"I have spent 37 years of my life here in Hutchinson and about 21 of it has been involved with the city government, whether it's been on the planning commission, city council or as mayor. And I figured out... my salary amounted to nine cents an hour. And I kind of think that that's pretty close to volunteerism, but I have enjoyed every minute of it — and I still enjoy it."*

Over 12,000 city, county, township, and school district officials devote literally millions of hours per year serving constituents, attending endless meetings, studying community issues in depth, and making difficult decisions on behalf of community members. Many local elected officials go further and also volunteer to serve on the boards and committees of organizations like the League of Minnesota Cities, Association of Minnesota Counties, Minnesota Association of Townships, and Minnesota School Boards Association. Through their voluntary contributions to these statewide and other affiliate organizations, these elected officials help ensure that Minnesota's local governments have access to the resources needed to do their jobs more effectively.

Snapshot of City Volunteers at Work

One of the most visible examples of citizen involvement is **Minneapolis'** Neighborhood Revitalization Project (NRP). NRP provides a neighborhood-based decision making process for the allocation of significant amounts of money directed at community livability issues. At a community meeting held in Golden Valley, a volunteer involved in the NRP, Melinda Ludwiczak, put it very succinctly, *"...the beauty of NRP is it's a grass-roots effort. It's looking at problems down at the block by block [level]... housing issues, ...libraries, schools and parks... you see a real impact right on your street, beautification, traffic calming, all kinds of issues that are addressed in our communities."* The NRP estimates that between 5000 - 7000 Minneapolis residents are active in NRP activities.

Windom Mayor John Galle Sr. has instituted a program that brings special recognition to the volunteers of his community - the *Mayor's Medal of Honor*. Prizes are awarded in ten categories, including artistic and cultural achievement, services by the elderly, good neighbor and more. The ceremony is conducted at the last council meeting of each year (a packed house) and pictures of the recipients hang in city hall for one year.

Many cities have rediscovered the importance of neighborhood associations in addressing community issues. **West St. Paul**, as a result of community focus groups, created a Neighborhood Coordinator position. That coordinator can call on volunteers in 11 neighborhood associations for projects like crime prevention, youth mentoring, commercial redevelopment, community cleanup, household hazardous waste cleanup, and even recycling of Christmas trees and pumpkins.

Not all cities track volunteer hours spent in service, but the city of **Plymouth** is an exception, and in 1998 reported that 924 residents volunteered 12,196 hours in city service worth approximately \$182,000.

County Level Volunteer Involvement

A 1996 survey of counties conducted by the *National Association of Counties' Volunteerism Project* found that 98% of all U.S. counties utilize volunteers in some capacity, including as non-paid board members and as service providers. County volunteers serve in libraries, corrections, parks and recreation, and social services.

Following are just a few examples of the ways Minnesota counties involve volunteers.

Clay County utilizes volunteers to provide transportation for county programs, such as chemical dependency treatment or foster care. Each volunteer driver contributes an average of three to four rides a week, and the program has doubled in size since 1995.

Anoka County volunteers served a total of 4,240 hours in 1999 providing respite and caregiver support, assistance with budgeting, family mentoring and clerical assistance.

Blue Earth County's 219 volunteers served 25,537 hours in corrections and human services in 1998, which has been consistent for several years.

Minnesota's largest county, **Hennepin**, involves volunteers in nine departments, including the medical center, the library, the public defender's office and adult services. The volunteer program has grown from 2,500 volunteers in 1995 to 2,800 in 1998, which resulted in 240,700 hours of service.

Washington and Ramsey Counties, among others in the state, have similar programs that involve volunteers who serve as court-appointed advocates for children involved in county court proceedings. Volunteers receive more than 40 hours of training and serve five to 10 hours a month.



Olmsted County's Justice and Social System Volunteer Program has 146 volunteers who assist clients in the county social service or corrections systems. Volunteers provide a vast array of services, including helping individuals leave welfare to find jobs and affordable housing counseling neglected children, and supporting offenders leaving prison in their re-entry into the community.

Volunteer Involvement in State Agencies

Minnesotans volunteer not only at the local level, but also at the state level for every State of Minnesota agency. Total hours of volunteer service for state agencies is not tracked; however, conservative estimates value it at over \$10 million annually.

A few examples of ways citizens volunteer for Minnesota State agencies include:

The Minnesota **Department of Natural Resources** (DNR) utilized over 32,000 volunteers in 1999, up from 21,000 in 1995. Hours of volunteer service rose from 303,811 in 1995 to 434,572 in 1999. DNR volunteers serve as campground hosts, firearms and snowmobile safety instructors, woodland advisors, wildlife researchers, lake level readers, precipitation observers and a wide variety of other assignments.



Department of Natural Resources volunteers collect seeds for prairie restoration.

The Fire/EMS/Safety Center, part of **Minnesota State Colleges and Universities**, reports that Minnesota presently has 16,200 volunteer firefighters who assist the state's 1,800 career firefighters.

Volunteer firefighters are literally lifesavers in towns and cities across Minnesota. These dedicated citizens spend countless hours in not only fighting fires, but also participating in extensive training and other activities to support small fire departments. As in the *1995 State of*

Volunteerism Report, recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters continues to be a problem. The number of volunteer firefighters is down from 18,000 in 1995.

The **Minnesota Department of Revenue** and the Internal Revenue Service use approximately 1,875 volunteers to prepare taxes for low income and elderly Minnesotans each year through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance/Tax Counseling for the Elderly.

Although the Minnesota **Department of Human Services** (DHS) eliminated the position that coordinated volunteer efforts in 1997, DHS continues to use thousands of volunteers through their many programs statewide. An example is the Citizen Review Panels through the DHS' Children's Service Administration. Thirty-three volunteers in Chisago, Ramsey and Washington counties ensure the child protection system prevents abuse and neglect, and that permanent homes are found for them.

The **Minnesota Historical Society** (MHS) had a total of 1,390 volunteers in 1999 to educate and inform the public about Minnesota's history. Volunteers provided a total of 33,985 hours of service to organize museum archives, assist with special events, and provide public information at historical sites throughout the state and at the Minnesota History Center. The level of volunteerism at MHS has remained the same since 1995.

The Minnesota **Department of Economic Security**, through State Services for the Blind, utilizes between 500 and 650 volunteers (about the same since 1995) to record tapes of textbooks for visually impaired students, read books and newspapers for a 24-hour radio service, and translate textbooks to Braille.

Volunteers play a strong role in Minnesota state and local government. However, to be effective, these citizen volunteer efforts need a solid infrastructure to ensure competence and best use of volunteers' time. Whether in direct service or civic engagement, professional management of Minnesota volunteers is vital in keeping government efficient, effective and connected to its citizens.

Service Programs Engage All Ages

Government funded service makes a substantial contribution to Minnesota volunteerism. More than 41,000 Minnesotans participate in one of 77 national service programs across the state: AmeriCorps, National Senior Service Corps, and Learn and Serve America. The programs are funded by both federal and state government from the Corporation for National Service, Minnesota YouthWorks and the Minnesota Board on Aging. In addition to service performed in Minnesota, the International service program - the Peace Corps - from 1995 through 1999, over 550 volunteers from Minnesota have served

RSVP Volunteers Carolyn Johnson and Dorothy Lynch with students from Farnsworth School, who together designed and made the Eastside History Quilt.



in 78 different countries around the world. The developing countries where they worked are located in: Africa, Central and South America, Eastern Europe, Asia, and the Mediterranean. The Peace Corps projects that Minnesotans worked on included: Community Development, Education, Health, Business, Environment, and Agriculture.

AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps members spend a year serving Minnesota communities in exchange for a living allowance and/or an education award. In the last five years, the program grew from about 400 members in 1995 to more than 900 members in 1999. AmeriCorps members serve the communities and agencies where they are placed in a variety of ways. Some examples include:

- AmeriCorps members with the Family Housing Impact program assisted over 400 homeowners and neighborhood residents with housing rehab, housing inspections, and assistance in acquiring neighborhood home improvements loans;
- Minnesota Conservation Corps members planted over 130,000 trees in 1998 and provided disaster relief to communities hit by spring storms and flooding;
- AmeriCorps members with the Wilder Foundation/St. Paul Public Housing Authority Welfare to Work project helped 300 households find employment - increasing the percentage of persons working in that area from 11 to 46%.

National Senior Service Corps

In 1999, about 18,300 older Minnesotans (up from 16,400 in 1995) volunteered through the three programs that make up the National Senior Service Corps: Foster Grandparents (FGP), Senior Companion Program (SCP) and Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). Examples of the service provided by Minnesota's Senior Corps include the following:

- Senior Companions on the Red Lake Indian Reservation serve 40 homebound elders, providing them with rides to the grocery store, medical appointments and elder nutrition sites, and Foster Grandparents have helped raise reading scores of children at two elementary schools and a Head Start program;
- An RSVP project in St. Cloud contributed 2,215 hours of service in 1999, producing over 1,200 toys that were distributed to 30 agencies serving children in need;
- RSVP volunteer drivers in a West Central Minnesota rural transit program provided 8,205 trips for 228 frail and vulnerable clients within a five-county area that has limited public transportation.

Learn and Serve America

Learn and Serve America provides grants for service-learning that make it possible for more than 22,000 Minnesota students from kindergarten through college to meet community needs while improving their skills and learning the habits of good citizenship. Two examples of Learn and Serve projects are:

- Metropolitan State University volunteers tutor elementary students to improve their literacy skills. In just one year, the number of first-grade children who successfully completed the school's reading program increased from 45% to 91%.
- The University of Minnesota - Morris provides service to the community through the *Tutoring, Reading, Educating Students* program. University students work three to six hours a week with over 250 elementary school children.

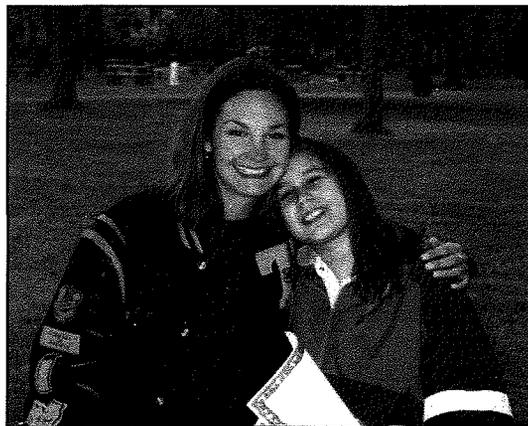
Nonprofit Sector Relies on Volunteers

Minnesota's nonprofit sector has grown significantly since the 1995 State of Volunteerism Report. According to the *Minnesota Nonprofit Economy Report* published by the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits (MCN), Minnesota had 4,410 nonprofit organizations with employees in 1998, an increase of 465 since 1995. The Arrowhead region of the state (which includes Duluth and the Iron Range) had the highest growth in nonprofit jobs. The state's nonprofit sector has grown more than five percent a year for the past six years. The true number of organizations in this sector is even larger when we count religious organizations, local chapters of large organizations such as the American Red Cross, self-help membership groups, and the many informal groups that care for everything from our kids to our parks.

The majority of places Minnesotans reported they volunteered in the *1999 Minnesota State Survey* were nonprofit organizations, and, as reported earlier in this report, social service organizations had the highest increase in where Minnesotans volunteer. Although no statewide tracking of volunteers in nonprofits is done, it would be safe to say that over half of the \$6.5 billion in volunteer service is performed for nonprofit organizations. Nonprofit organizations rely heavily on volunteers to enhance and assist with service delivery, to direct their activities through boards of directors and advisory committees, to perform administrative support through marketing, technical assistance, and more.

Community-based Initiatives Foster Citizen Participation

One of the themes that dominated the findings of this report is that communities are seeing an increased need for collaboration - private and public organizations, businesses, faith-based organizations, schools and nonprofits - to solve critical issues facing their citizens. Among the most popular workshops at conferences are those focusing on building collaborations or community-based partnerships. Although these community-based initiatives are diverse in service and organizations, a common



Erica Jenson, a student of Totino-Grace High School, mentors a resident of the CommonBond Community.



Youth build bird houses as a service project at the Minnesota Alliance with Youth "Serve Day" at the Minnesota State Fair.

bond is that they are community *defined and driven* with broad buy-in by multi sector stakeholders. **Family Service Collaboratives** have been active throughout Minnesota since 1993 and are now found in 67 counties. Two recently formed national initiatives fostering community-building - Search Institute's *Healthy Communities* • *Healthy Youth*, and *America's Promise* - are very active in Minnesota.

The Children's Initiative of St. Paul/Ramsey County, an example of the Family Collaborative model, involves over 200 volunteers at both the Children's Initiative level and at the nine Family Centers. Parent volunteers are the majority of board members and are responsible for decision making with public partner volunteers such as the city, county and school district, as well as community volunteers (community-based organizations). Volunteers also perform a variety of direct service, including mentoring, family home visits, tutoring, training volunteers, office support, publicity, and more. Volunteers are also community mobilizers - advocating for local and national change. An essential part of the volunteer program and what leads to continued success is extensive training of volunteers in health and child development and inclusive community decision making, which is provided by the collaborative's public partners.

In 1997, the *President's Summit* held in Philadelphia brought together all the living presidents and challenged Americans to step up and volunteer to better serve the needs of America's at-risk youth. Led by retired General Colin Powell that initiative has become a national movement - *America's Promise - The Alliance for Youth*. The **Minnesota Alliance with Youth - Fulfilling America's Promise** was started as a result of the national summit. Since October 1997, the Minnesota Alliance has developed over 100 *Communities of Promise* (communities representing major metropolitan areas, cities, counties, townships, towns, neighborhoods and communities of faith) that have committed to working on strategies to bring the five fundamental resources of *America's Promise* to youth. Many other communities are in the introduction stages of becoming *Communities of Promise*. The *Alliance* has signed on hundreds of partners™ in the public and private sector to increase the resources for young people in Minnesota.

The focus of the work of the Alliance is in five areas or *promises* to youth: **mentor** - a caring adult in every child's life; **protect** - a safe place for after school time; **nurture** - a healthy start for all children; **teach/learn** - an education that creates marketable skills; and **serve** - an opportunity to give back to their community.

Since 1993, Search Institute has been working with communities toward a vision of community-wide commitment to youth, expanding upon a 30-year tradition of applied research into youth development. In 1996, the institute launched a national *Healthy Communities • Healthy Youth* (HC•HY) initiative to support communities in their work. Based on Search Institute's framework of developmental assets (e.g., positive values, boundaries and expectations) this initiative seeks to motivate and equip individuals, organizations, and their leaders to join together in nurturing competent, caring, and responsible children and adolescents. Minnesota communities have taken the lead nationally in supporting the HC•HY movement. Since its inception, 117 HC•HY citizen led initiatives across Minnesota are mobilizing organizations and citizens to make a commitment to building the resources available to their community's youth. The heart and soul of these initiatives does not lie within organizations alone. Through HC•HY, people are making a difference in their community - both as volunteers and in their role as citizens.

Another example of a community-based initiative is **RSVP**

Volunteers United, Volunteer Leadership Councils located in southwest Minnesota. Covering five counties in the most southwest part of the state, RSVP Volunteers United is truly an intergenerational approach to community building, using citizen participation from all sectors. An example of one of the initiatives is the Ortonville After School Mentoring Program. The development and management of this program is the



An AmeriCorps Fellow designed and created a mural which now hangs in the 4-H Extension Building at the Minnesota State Fair. Citizens from Communities of Promise around the state painted quilt pieces depicting their involvement.

(right) General Mills Retiree Volunteers package holiday plants.

(below) RSVP Volunteer Mary Ann Franssen with members of the 'Smore Fun Club, an after school project.



result of a collaboration of RSVP Volunteers United, the Ortonville School District, Key Club, MN Extension and the New Life Community Baptist Church. The program serves children grades K-6th utilizing senior citizens and teens who provide them with a healthy snack, organized gym and other enrichment activities, assistance with homework/reading, computer skills and relationship building each Tuesday and Thursday during the school year. There are no paid staff and no charge to the children.

Volunteer Contributions of the Faith Community

Volunteering through a religious organization rates second (64%) in the 1999 *Minnesota State Survey* as a place Minnesotans contributed their time. Within their own faith community, volunteers perform a wide range of duties from board membership, religious instruction, or building maintenance to leading youth programs, assisting elderly members, and visiting the sick. Minnesotans not only volunteer at their own church, temple or mosque, but also *through* them, to do a variety of direct services and social justice activities in the broader community.

Deacon Fred Johnson of St. Peter Claver church said at a community meeting in St. Paul, “. . . *there can be, should be, ought to be a partnership between groups that are located in a community and ... with the government. ... [as] an example of that, our parish became a homeless shelter... working with Ramsey County welfare. By day we were a normal parish. By night we are a homeless shelter... over 100 volunteers - who volunteered overnight, got up from volunteering and would go to work. ... it was a big impact on the homeless people. They said that they had never been treated with so much dignity, so much respect as was shown by the volunteers.*”

Minnesota has the distinction of being one of only a few states with a statewide professional association of church volunteer coordinators. From an informal beginning in 1986, the **Minnesota Association of Church Volunteer Coordinators** (MACVC) became a nonprofit corporation in 1994. It has worked at the state level of leadership, representing their sector with the annual *Minnesota Conference on Volunteerism*, the *Volunteer Leadership Consortium* with curriculum development, and the *Volunteer Leadership 2000* initiative encouraging statewide networks to work in collaboration.

Congregations are benefiting from this proficiency of volunteer coordination in many ways: development of a greater variety of volunteer opportunities for all ages so more people can volunteer; partnerships with other faith based groups to build relationships and leverage more resources; and better connections with and response to community needs.

An example of a faith-based initiative to strengthen families and neighborhoods, **Congregations in Community** (CIC) was launched in 1996 by the McKnight Foundation. Partners in CIC include the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches, Masjid An-Nur Islamic Centers of Minneapolis and St. Paul, the St. Paul Area Council of Churches, MetroLINC at TURN - Twin Cities Urban Reconciliation Network, and Avodah B'Yachad - Service Together of the Jewish Community Relations Council of Minnesota and the Dakotas. CIC has enlisted over 7,000 Christian, Jewish and Muslim volunteers to address issues such as housing, neighborhood revitalization, food programs, mentoring, literacy and jobs. The **Twin Cities Coalition for Literacy** is comprised of 17 Jewish community congregations and organizations working to build the reading skills of children ages five to nine.

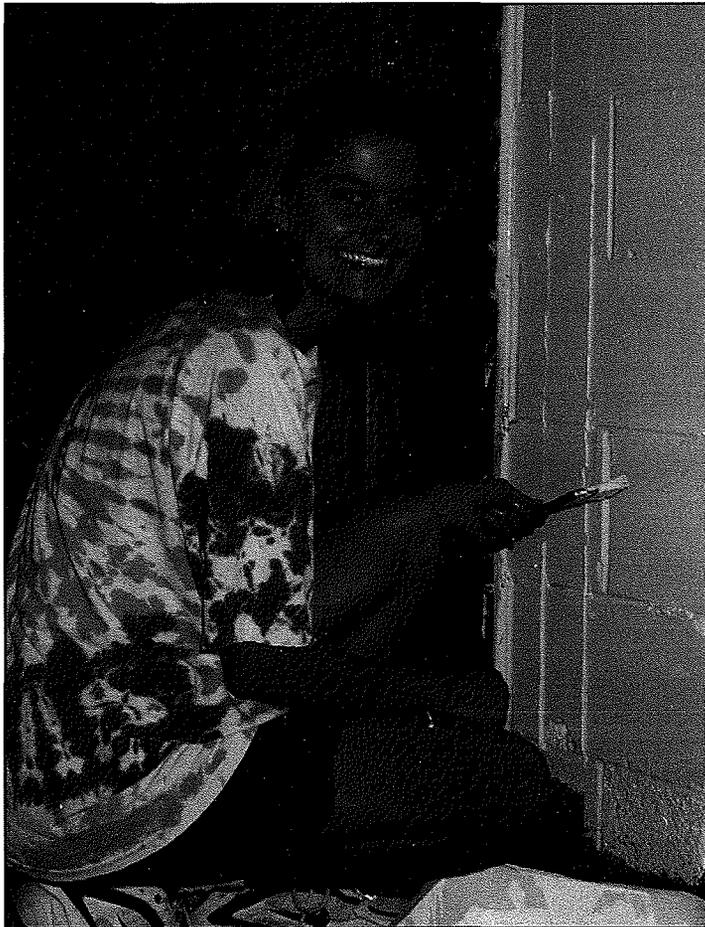


Janice, Mike, and Mindy Schachtman participate in a housing revitalization project through Avodah B'Yachad – Service Together.

Uniting Congregations for Youth Development, developed by Search Institute, focused on building the assets of congregations so they can develop assets needed by their youth. Although this initiative ended in 1999, resources and training from the project are still available through Search Institute. Congregation partnerships also often cross sectors involving the broader community, including businesses and government.

The **Minnesota Alliance with Youth** offers congregations many ways to be involved in addressing the needs of young people in Minnesota communities. Faith communities recruit and train mentors, provide after school activities, house community clinics, tutor English learners and, of course, offer many opportunities for young people to serve.

Minnesota's religious communities volunteer in countless ways. As Paula Beugen and Jay Tcath of the Jewish Community Relations Council of Minnesota and the Dakotas, stated in *Volunteerism and Religion: A U.S. Midwestern Perspective*: "From direct service to advocacy, from fundraising to education projects, a veritable super-market of service choices is in place to spark the interest of volunteers, responding to the needs of the hungry, homeless and otherwise disadvantaged."



Youth Service - Tomorrow's Leaders Today

The role of young volunteers has expanded in the past five years and is increasingly recognized as a huge part of the overall volunteer activity in the state, as well as a method for positive youth development. A 1995 Search Institute study found that youth who volunteer just one hour or more a week are 50% less likely to abuse drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, or engage in other destructive behavior.

Youth serving organizations have long recognized volunteerism and service as a method of developing future leaders by putting them in authentic leadership positions today. The mission of the **Minnesota Alliance with Youth** is to "Develop the capacity of Minnesota communities to engage children and youth in reaching their full potential as citizens." The relationship between youth service and being an active adult community member is well documented. INDEPENDENT SECTOR'S *Care and Community in Modern*

Society: Passing on the Tradition of Service to Future Generations reports that young people will become active citizen participants if they:

1. Had parents or other adult role models who volunteered.
2. Were involved in a youth group or other voluntary organization.
3. Were involved in a religious congregation where they were volunteers or were introduced to volunteerism outside of the congregation.
4. Were exposed to volunteering as part of school activity.
5. Saw respected young peers volunteer.
6. Were influenced by favorable media coverage of volunteering.

A majority of Minnesota's 299 school districts encourage youth volunteerism through service learning, a concept that combines education with service. The *1998 Report on Minnesota Streams of Service*, produced by the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning, stated the following:

- More than 190,000 students participated in service (an increase from 173,000 in 1995).
- 61 percent of the state's public schools offered course credit at the senior high level for service-learning.
- 49 percent of school districts offer a separate class for service-learning experiences (an increase from 31 percent in 1996).
- 86 percent of school districts offer other service and volunteerism through committee and leadership development activities.

Young people are involved in a variety of volunteer activities through service - learning programs, including peer tutoring, volunteering at homeless shelters, helping build affordable housing, and educating other students about their own unique life experiences (such as teen parenting).

Corporations Encourage Employee Volunteerism

Minnesota Corporations are nationally known and recognized for their unparalleled philanthropy and outstanding record of giving back. The **Minnesota Business Partnership** (MBP), comprised of 100 of Minnesota's largest companies found, through a 1999 survey, that its members contributed \$300 million annually to charitable organizations. In addition, the 370,000 employees of these companies volunteer more than six million hours each year, and 92% of CEOs responding to the survey serve on charitable boards of directors.

Since the *1995 State of Volunteerism Report*, volunteerism through Minnesota companies has expanded both in the number of employees volunteering and in the variety of activities in which employees are involved. Examples include: E-mentoring - mentoring through e-mail weekly or more often, which also includes group activities; building homes through Habitat for Humanity; serving meals to seniors or homeless people; mentoring youth, individuals or families; and participating in programs through



General Mills Employees worked on trail repair at YMCA Camp Christmas Tree. Over 50 employees helped the camp get ready for their summer season.

schools such as tutoring, literacy skill development and adopt-a-school programs.

Approximately 15 businesses are members of the **Corporate Volunteer Council of Duluth**. Members include businesses from health care, retail, finance, and the media. Public schools and city government are also involved. According to the President of the Duluth CVC, Bob Suomela, the annual Paint-a-Thon (painting homes for people unable to do so themselves) is the best known of the many events the council sponsors. For 13 years, area businesses have worked together to help families in need give their homes a fresh look. To date, over 130 homes have been painted through their efforts.

Between 50 and 60 Twin Cities area companies currently participate in the **Corporate Volunteerism Council of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area (CVC)**, according to President Carolyn Blesi. The CVC promotes employee and retiree volunteerism, connects businesses and nonprofit organizations through partnerships for community improvement, and offers resources to assist members in developing and maintaining corporate volunteer programs.

A 1999 CVC survey found that companies sponsored an average of 11 volunteer events each year. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of the companies surveyed said their employees were very involved or somewhat involved in the corporate volunteer program.

The report adds that companies must include funds to coordinate the volunteer program in order to be most successful. The report further concludes that companies can heighten employee interest and participation by involving the employees in planning and initiating volunteer activities. *"If executives encourage middle managers to support volunteer initiatives, it is more likely that managers will provide employees time off to participate in volunteer activities,"* states the CVC report.

Sixty-one percent (61%) of the companies surveyed said they had a written volunteer policy. Over half the companies surveyed stated that a commitment to social responsibility is embedded in the values or mission statement of the company. The most common goals of volunteer policies were to:

- enhance the well-being of the community,

“You can’t go through life with a catcher’s mitt on each hand. You have to throw something back.”

– Glen Reickert

- enhance the community by providing human resources,
- enhance company presence in communities being served, and
- provide an opportunity for employees to become involved in community activities.

Employers are also beneficiaries of corporate volunteer programs. Volunteering develops employees’ skills and work-group skills. Improvements volunteer efforts bring to the businesses’ communities enhance their business, and studies show that employees that lead a balanced fulfilling life are more productive at work.

Senior Volunteers - Opportunities and Challenges

Older Minnesotans are a vital part of the fabric of Minnesota volunteerism, and are actively engaged in every aspect of service. Retired executives are offering their professional expertise to nonprofit organizations. Retired teachers (and other retirees) are tutoring in schools. Seniors are caring for their elderly peers who need assistance with shopping, transportation or meal delivery, as well as caring for young children by performing daycare or acting as foster grandparents. Glen Reickert, a senior volunteer, winner of the *1998 Governor’s Acts of Kindness Award*, commented on his volunteer work at a community meeting in Moorhead, “You can’t go through life with a catcher’s mitt on each hand. You have to throw something back.”

Minnesota senior citizens volunteer more than their younger neighbors. The *1999 Minnesota State Survey* reports that 68% of Minnesotans 55 and older volunteered an average of 4.5 hours a week in the last six months, compared to 66% of the Minnesota general population who volunteer an average of 3.78 hours week. As Minnesotans age, if they continue to volunteer, they volunteer more each week - people 65+ volunteered 5.6 hours per week. Senior volunteering in Minnesota is up from 58% reported in 1998 and 61% reported in 1997. The Minnesota Board on Aging’s 1995 Survey of Older Minnesotans expanded the definition of volunteering to include *assistance to family members and other individuals*, and reported a total of 85% of Minnesotans age 60 and older provide some form of volunteer service to others.

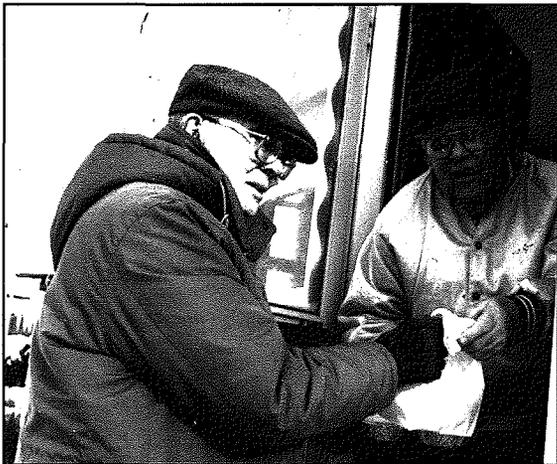
Older Minnesotans also volunteer at a higher rate than their peers do nationally. Independent Sector 1998 reports in *America’s Senior Volunteers*, that almost 44% of seniors volunteered at least once that year for an average of 4.4 hours per week.

Minnesota	1989	1999
Percentage volunteered	60%	68%
Hr/wk	3.3	4.45
Hours served	70 million	154 million
Annual \$ value	\$28,020,300	\$2.2 billion

Source: 1999 Minnesota State Survey, U of M Center for Survey Research and Wilder Research Center Report, October 1999

At the same time volunteerism is increasing among older Minnesotans, the *number* of older people in Minnesota is also increasing. The aging baby boom generation “will be the most profound age shift in [Minnesota] history,” according to the March 1999 DHS report on *Project 2030* (a research project studying the effects of Minnesota’s aging population). Americans are living longer and retiring earlier than ever. According to the U.S. census bureau, the average life expectancy in 1950 was 68 - in 1999 it is 76. At the same time, people are retiring earlier than ever - in 1950, 81% of men age 62 were still in the work force, compared to 54% today.

Yet, as MOCVS traveled around the state taking verbal and written testimony for this report, a common challenge discussed was that, as senior volunteers “retire” from service due to health or age, many programs are not successful in recruiting younger seniors to take their place. The difference in the generations may account for this seeming paradox.



RSVP Volunteer Alan Phelps delivering meals on wheels.

In 1999 the Minnesota Board on Aging’s study **Community Involvement of Older Minnesotans: A Snapshot of Baby Boomers and Older Adults**, included surveys and focus groups of older adults and baby boomers. They found that both age groups participate in their communities at the same rate; however older adults give more hours than baby boomers. Also, their motivation for service is different and, as quoted from the report, “...older adults are motivated more often than baby boomers by a desire to spend time with people and to feel useful and needed. Baby boomers have a strong desire to rebuild a sense of community and create a more positive world for their children and future generations.”

In a survey conducted for Civic Ventures, **The New Face of Retirement: Older Americans, Civic Engagement, and the Longevity Revolution**, September 1999, older Americans rated volunteering/community service second only to traveling as an important part of their retirement. According to this survey, these new seniors view retirement as “a

time to begin a new chapter in life by being active and involved, starting new activities, and setting new goals.” Clearly, current research points to one fact - the aging baby boom generation is a huge potential market for volunteer programs and community involvement. But the service must be meaningful to *their* generation. As one person quipped in written testimony from the Brainerd community meeting, “... as baby boomers retire they will want...assignments with more challenges — senior centers had better do something other than stuff envelopes and fry donuts!” Volunteer managers and community leaders must meet the challenge of changing the role of older volunteers, and thereby meet the needs of the older volunteers and the community.

Minnesota Service Clubs - Adapting to the New Century

Although membership in service clubs has decreased nationwide, they are still a substantial part of volunteerism throughout Minnesota. Kiwanis, Lions, Rotary, Sertoma, and Jaycees, to name a few, are familiar to citizens across the state due to their long standing service and involvement in their communities, and highly visible fundraising and service projects. Each service organization is unique, as are the many chapters - most have a particular focus in the communities they serve.

Rotary International members in Minnesota have been involved in projects such as Junior Achievement, teaching inner-city high school students economics and personal finance skills, or projects with an international twist, like the *Books for Africa* project. Minnesota's 147 Rotary clubs have 8,200 members, about the same since 1995. Due to an aging and declining membership nationally, Rotary International has started Rotaract - a "junior" Rotary for 18-30 year olds. Rotary has also developed an "Associate Membership" level to allow young people to join with limited benefits for a much lower fee.

Kiwanis Club

members are not only involved in community service themselves, but they also establish and support volunteer programs for young people. K-Kids is geared toward elementary students; Key Clubs target secondary school students; and Circle K provides service opportunities for college students. There are 123 Kiwanis clubs throughout the state, totaling almost 8,500 members. This represents a drop in membership since 1995, when almost 9,500 individuals participated in Kiwanis.



Minnesota **Lions** focus on providing medical services, such as giving rides to people who are blind, screening for diabetes at shopping centers and offering *55 Alive* classes for older drivers. They also raise funds that sponsor programs like the Eye Bank at the University of Minnesota and the Leader Dog program. Minnesota has 570 Lions Clubs and 22,000 members, about the same number serving in 1995.

The Minnesota **Junior Chamber of Commerce**, or Jaycees, has 170 chapters in Minnesota with 6,800 members. The Jaycees' community service includes many projects to help disadvantaged and at-risk children. In addition to volunteer service, Jaycees chapters are also well known for leadership development of their members.

Service clubs from around the state also fund the **Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership** (HOBY) Training. The mission of HOBY is to seek out, recognize, and develop leadership potential of the world's youth. By focusing on positive youth development and leadership, and offering innovative ways for young people to be involved in these traditional service clubs, the leadership of these organizations is showing commitment to adapt their programs and better serve their communities.

The **Junior League** continues to be active in Minnesota. All three chapters, in Duluth, Minneapolis, and St. Paul, offer programs on domestic abuse. The Minneapolis Junior League involves its 1,000 members in Free Arts Minnesota, an arts program for abused children. The Saint Paul Junior League, comprised of more than 400 members, participates in the Child Abuse Project, designed to educate and advocate for children's rights. The Duluth Junior League is part of the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, a collaboration between city officials, public and private agencies to create policies and procedures for intervention in criminal domestic assault cases.

The **National Council of Jewish Women** (NCJW) has chapters in Minneapolis and Saint Paul with a total of 2,000 members statewide. The council's mission is to improve the quality of life for women, children and families, and to ensure individual rights and freedom. Jane Sternberg, of the Minneapolis chapter, said the council's 1,300 Minneapolis members focus their efforts on school-related activities. In 1999, NCJW members in Minneapolis distributed 6,500 packets of school supplies to students at schools in which the majority of children are from low-income households. Through fundraising and volunteer efforts, they plan to distribute 9,000 packets in 2000.

Index of Organizations

CIC	Congregations in Community
CVC	Corporate Volunteerism Council
DHS	Department of Human Services
DNR	Department of Natural Resources
FGP	Foster Grandparents Program
HC•HY	Healthy Communities • Healthy Youth - Search Institute
LMC	League of Minnesota Cities
MACVC	Minnesota Association of Church Volunteer Coordinators
MAVD	Minnesota Association of Volunteer Directors
MCDHCV	Minnesota Council of Directors of Health Care Volunteers
MOCVS	Minnesota Office of Citizenship and Volunteer Services
NYLC	National Youth Leadership Council
RSVP	Retired Senior Volunteer Program
SCP	Senior Companions Program
TURN	Twin Cities Urban Reconciliation Network
VLC	Volunteer Leadership Consortium

Recommendations

MOCVS Future Direction

In keeping with the findings of this report, and the direction of the Minnesota State Legislature through Minnesota Statute 16B.88, MOCVS will focus its efforts in the following areas:

- Develop expertise in Minnesota's volunteer leaders and community-based organizations for collaboration and partnerships that will leverage funding and shared resources.
- Promote cultural competence in citizen volunteers and leaders to better recognize and support the contributions of Minnesota's ethnically and racially diverse populations.
- Increase resources available to volunteer programs to assist them in effectively drawing upon Minnesota's aging population and develop meaningful volunteer opportunities for older volunteers.
- Increase expertise of state agencies and local government to actively engage citizen volunteers.
- Work with business, government, faith and community based organizations to continue the work started through the *Minnesota Alliance with Youth*.
- Increase citizen/volunteer expertise to proactively engage community problem solving.
- Annually document and publish the level and financial impact of volunteerism in Minnesota, and educate policymakers, as well as public and private funders, on the *return on investment* of citizen volunteer efforts and volunteer programs.
- Promote and recognize creative and shining examples of citizen participation efforts and volunteerism in the public and private sectors.
- Increase resources available to volunteer programs and centers to improve their use of modern technology for recruitment, training, and services.

Acknowledgements

A report of this scope could not have been done without the input and hard work of many individuals around the state. MOCVS Advisory Committee members worked on the report planning and design for the last two years. They coordinated community meetings in their communities, resulting in hundreds of formal testimonies from all over the state. We are grateful to Lieutenant Governor Mae Schunk for her participation on the MOCVS Advisory Committee and assistance in publicizing the community meetings around the state. Our many partners in the private and public sector also helped in pulling information together - especially from their own sectors. Over four hundred Minnesotans attended community meetings and gave verbal testimony or submitted written testimony before, after, or during the meetings. And finally, over a dozen "readers" from all sectors and parts of the state helped staff with the final edits and content of this report. *We thank each one of our volunteers, friends, and partners for their time and thoughtful input, to help make this report reflective of the Minnesota State of Volunteerism over the past five years!*

Governor Jesse Ventura

Lieutenant Governor Mae Schunk

Co-Chair, MOCVS Advisory Committee

Department of Administration Commissioner David Fisher

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Kent Allin – *Assistant Commissioner Operations Management Bureau*

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Elaine White – *Region 04*

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Gaylord Keck – *Region 08*

Susan Pronk – *Region 09*

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Sandy Weisenburger – *Region 11*

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***MOCVS' Mission** is to promote citizen participation efforts, increase the impact of volunteer programs, and stimulate public-private partnerships.*

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