

Voluntary Service

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

BRIEF OUTLINE:

1. Definition of a Volunteer
2. Reasons for Volunteering
3. Statistics
4. Value of a volunteer
5. Volunteering at the Ralph H. Johnson VAMC
6. Training and requirements
7. Opportunities
8. Why Volunteers remain committed
9. Why Volunteers lose interest

What does the phrase "Volunteer your time or service" mean to you?

Volunteerism's definition is the willingness of people to work on behalf of others without the expectation of pay or other tangible gain. Volunteers may have special training as rescuers, guides, assistants, teachers, missionaries, etc. But the vast majority, work on an impromptu basis, recognizing a need and filling it, whether it be the dramatic search for a lost child or the mundane giving of directions to a lost visitor.

How many of you have volunteered for something in your in your lifetime whether it was for your church, school, or an organization? Why did you do this?

Was it mandated for something such as community service needed for a badge with Girl or Boy Scouts? To put

service hours on college applications? To be eligible for honor society in high school?

Most of you did it because you felt it was a cause worthwhile. Today many organizations and businesses depend on volunteers to work along side their staff. They don't do the staffs work for them but lighten their load.

Statics on Volunteers:

44 percent of American adults volunteer in some capacity.

To break that down even further 83.9 million Americans volunteer representing the equivalent of over 9 million full time employees at a value of \$239 billion dollars to various businesses, organizations, and institutions.

2/3 of those adults began volunteering when they were young. High School volunteering recently reached the highest levels within the past 50 years.

Statistics have proven that those who volunteer as youth and whose parents volunteered in some capacity become the most generous adults in giving times.

The national Independent Sector stated that the nationwide average values of a volunteer 21 years of age during 2006-07 were \$18.04 per hours.

The value of volunteer time is based on the average hourly earnings of all production and non-supervisory workers.

It is very difficult to put a dollar value on volunteer time.

Volunteers provide many intangibles that can not be easily quantified. For example, volunteers demonstrate the amount of support an organization has within a community, provide work for short periods of time, and provide support on a wide range of projects.

Volunteers don't work for pay. It's not because they are worthless, it's because they are priceless.

Public trust is the single most important asset of the non-profit and philanthropic community. (Philanthropic.. As the "giving back" to the community type service organizations i.e. Lions Club, VFW, Rotary) Without it, donors will not give and volunteers will not get involved. Leaders in voluntary and philanthropic organizations need to make a lifelong commitment to paying attention to ethical practices and be responsible stewards of resources.

How committed is the Ralph H. Johnson to its Volunteer Program? Our hospital is very committed. The staff is well aware that none of us could do the job that we do effectively without the support of our volunteer team.

I would like to spend a little time with you sharing what the volunteer's role is at the Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center.

We have approximately 500 volunteers with. 500 different talents. We have retired teachers, bankers, insurance sales men and women, farmers, phlebotomists, optometry assistants, beauticians, active duty and retired military personal and a variety of others.

Volunteers not only do the Medical Center a service, we offer them a service too. We provide them with a wonderful institution to use their talents after they retire.

We also give them usefulness of their hands and time.

Their coworkers become their friends outside the medical center just like some of you in your place of work.

In almost all modern societies, the most basic of all values is people helping people and, in the process, helping themselves. But a tension can arise between volunteerism and the state-provided services, so most countries develop policies and enact legislation to clarify the roles and

relationships among stakeholders, and to identify and allocate the necessary and legal, social, administrative and financial support. This is particularly necessary when some voluntary activities are seen as a challenge to the authority of the state. On January 29, 2001, President Bush cautioned that volunteer groups should supplement, not replace the work of agencies.

That is why our volunteers go through an orientation process. They fill out application. We process criminal background checks, check references, and then come in for an interview, and receive a two-step PPD test. They clock and receive VA badges that identify them as VA volunteers.

We place volunteers at Ralph H. Johnson in many job assignments. Here are just a few:

DAYTIME VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

Clerical	Xeroxing	light typing
Filing	Answering phones	Supply Room
Computers	Patient escort	Golf cart drivers
Greeters	information Desk	Write letters
Prescription packaging	Recreation activities	Patient Library
Volunteer Liaison	Read books/newspapers	Visitation
Surveys	Trainer	Vol. Office
Coffee Cart	Crafts	

*The MHICUM (Mental Health Intensive Case Management Program) is looking for volunteers to assist them with this program.

Volunteer Settings: Primary Care Clinics, Nursing Home Care Unit, Inpatient wards, Day Hospital, Administrative Offices, and Day Hospital

EVENING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

Patient escort	Help feed patients	Read
Visitation	Recreation activities	Write letters
Coffee Cart		

We have men, women, students, and couples that work together ranging from ages of 14-92.

I would like to show you a video of our volunteers in action show video

In 2007 our Volunteers clocked in over 75,000 hours and that is those that remembered to clock in. Many people don't recognize a volunteers worth like the Independent

Sector I mentioned earlier at 18.09. That is close to One million dollars.

Along with many talents our volunteers bring to the hospital, they also come sometimes with heavy hearts.

Many of them are widows, and dealing with loneliness.

If you have the opportunity to work with a volunteer or call for a volunteer assistance I encourage you to be sure and introduce yourself to them. Remember to thank them for that lab test they picked up or the x-ray or nourishment tray they delivered, or that patient they dismissed so you take care of the next task on your list or get that room ready for the next patient.

The gratitude you personally show them far out way any money they could receive.

WHY VOLUNTEERS REMAIN COMMITTED

1. They feel appreciated

2. They can see their presence does make a difference
3. There is opportunity for personal growth
4. Their personal needs are being met
5. They receive private and public recognition
6. They feel capable of handling the tasks offered
7. There is a sense of belonging and "team" among co-workers
8. They are involved in the administrative process, like problem solving, decision making and objective setting
9. They recognize that something significant is happening because the group exists

WHY VOLUNTEERS LOSE INTEREST

1. Discrepancies between their expectations, or task, and reality of the situation

2. No feeling of making a difference -- no praise or reward
3. Too routine, no variety
4. Lack of support from co-workers
5. Little prestige related to the task or group
6. No Chance for personal growth
7. No Chance to meet personal needs
8. Too little chance to demonstrate initiative or creativity
9. Tension among co-workers

Next I want to touch on two other areas that we use volunteers. One is our Transportation program and the other is our ICU liaison.

Our transportation program has 42 volunteer drivers. They get up at 5:00am and transport patients from the CBOC

(Savannah, Myrtle Beach, Loris, Beaufort, Hampton County, Walterborough, and Summerville) wait until the patient has received treatment and then return patient safely home. Their day goes from about 5:00am until 6:00pm. Now that is a dedicated volunteer!

Next we have established an assignment to help those family members who have patients undergoing surgery, or are in the ICU's. This volunteer keeps family members updated on progress of patient, and communicates from professional staff to family members; they also make their time they are waiting a little easier by providing coffee and refreshments. This act of kindness and generosity goes a long way to family members during this stressful time. Volunteering benefits everyone!

Now before I go, I know you have been sitting awhile so I ask you to sit up on the edge of your chairs,

(Pause until they do so)

Now an the count of three, everyone raise their voice and say "YEAH:"

I always want to go back and, let them know I had everyone on the edge of their seats, cheering to them.

Thank you ladies and Gentleman.