STRENGTHENING VOLUNTEERISM: A Guide for Jewish Federations

Human Services and Social Policy Pillar
Volunteerism Task Force

United Jewish Communities
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May 2005

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The **Volunteerism Task Force** was developed to maximize the effective use of volunteers and strengthen volunteerism throughout the Jewish Federation system in order to:
- Bring additional skills and talent to bear for the federation system
- Engage and involve unaffiliated and under-affiliated Jews
- Enhance service provision and fundraising efforts
- Build and strengthen bridges to the general community through service

The **Human Services and Social Policy Pillar** helps federations build caring Jewish communities consistent with our commitment to tzedakah and gemilut chasidim, to help Jews in need and repair the world.

Special thanks to Richard Wexler for his contribution to this report highlighting legal issues in governance and to Rabbi Louis Feldstein for his contribution on the Jewish values of volunteerism.

The Volunteerism Task Force mourns the passing of Karen Shapira. A past Chair of the United Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh, a Vice Chair of UJC and past Chair of its Israel and Overseas Pillar, Karen represented the best in governance volunteering. She brought to all her assignments initiative, intelligence, wisdom, heart and passion. She will be sorely missed by all who knew her.

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executive summary

All of Israel is responsible for one another.

Talmud

Volunteerism is an increasingly vital issue within the Jewish federation system as we seek to provide increased levels of service to the community, engage those who have little or no contact with the organized Jewish community and build strong and vibrant Jewish communities. Many federations have successful programs to engage volunteers and utilize them in the critical Jewish work of *tikkun olam*.

- The Jewish community utilizes volunteers in a number of capacities including: governance, advocacy, hands-on service and management assistance (those who contribute their professional expertise).
- The financial value of volunteer time in the U.S. for 2004 was $272 billion.
- Volunteers provide critical time and resources to the Jewish communal system and derive benefit by engaging in meaningful service.
- Forty-four percent of Jews report they volunteer, although only 25% volunteer for Jewish organizations.
- The primary reason people volunteer is because they are asked. We should have a clear , comprehensive and continual process for asking people to serve their community.
- Volunteers can engage on a one-time/occassional basis, on an ongoing basis or in a full-time intensive program, through a service learning program, over the internet or through a service exchange program.
- There are different needs, challenges and opportunities in engaging different groups of volunteers from youth to older adult, from families to people with disabilites.
- Volunteers must be cultivated, nurtured, involved, recognized and thanked. It is an ongoing process that should not stop once a volunteer placement has been made.
- Volunteers provide important unpaid services, but volunteers are not free. There is an investment to be made in appropriate volunteer management, but it is one that can yeild substantial returns.
- The Urban Institute has identified the following nine components of effective use of volunteers: supervision, liability coverage, volunteer tracking, screening, job descriptions, recognition activities, impact measurement, volunteer training, staff training.
- Building a volunteer program involves a number of key steps including assessing needs, building support, gathering leaders, developing partnerships, identifying resources, creating an implementation plan and ongoing evaluation.
- There are significant legal issues related to the use of volunteers which require careful consideration, but should not be viewed as an insurmountable barrier.
- Volunteerism is at the core of Jews' responsibility to aid those in need.
- Many Jewish federations have volunteer programs which serve as the communal clearinghouse for volunteer activities and develop community volunteer projects.

introduction

A person starts to live when he can live outside himself.

Albert Einstein

In 2004, UJC's Human Services and Social Policy Pillar established the Volunteerism Task Force to seek meaningful ways to assist local communities in expanding, strengthening and developing their utilization of volunteers. This guide was developed to provide concrete information about the various types of volunteerism, trends within and outside the Jewish federation system and ideas that can be implemented locally.

There is some evidence to suggest that there is a renewed spirit of volunteerism emerging despite the fact that many indicate work and family obligations compete for their time. Those seeking volunteer opportunities often note that they are seeking a way to give back to their community or feel connected to others. If this is the case, how can the federation system position itself to engage more people in volunteer activity within and on behalf of the Jewish community?

In considering the realm of volunteerism, the committee recognized that within the federation system, there are several types of volunteers including:

- **Governance –** those who serve on boards and committees and focus on policy decisions, planning and the development of campaigns including fundraising.
- **Hands-on –** those who provide direct services to meet client or organizational needs (e.g., friendly visitors, food pantry staffing).
- **Management Assistance** - those who utilize their professional expertise on behalf of the organization (e.g., pro bono legal advice, developing marketing materials, etc.).
- **Advocacy** – those who further an organization's agenda through community relations work and advocacy at the local, state or national level.

Volunteerism is often overlooked or undervalued. However, it offers multiple benefits that are central to the functioning and future of our system. Volunteers provide an invaluable source of time and expertise to federations and affiliated agencies. Volunteers themselves are enriched by the experience of volunteering. Engaging unaffiliated Jews in the community remains a major challenge for our system. Volunteerism can be a point of entry and methodology for developing leaders and donors.

We hope that you find this guide useful and share it with others. Please let us know your thoughts and suggestions for future activity in the important area of volunteerism. You can contact Michelle Labgold by phone at 202-736-5880 or via email at michelle.labgold@ujc.org.

why volunteerism?

For 2004, the national financial value of volunteer time is estimated at $272 billion.

The Jewish federation system has a strong history and commitment to voluntary activity. Our philanthropic endeavors, board and committee work and social service delivery systems all rely upon the service of volunteers in various capacities. Often when we think of volunteers, we think of the ways that volunteers bring their time, talent and skills to organizations and those they serve. In fact, many organizations have begun to track volunteer time and assign it a dollar value. For 2004, the United States' national estimated value of a volunteer hour was $17.55 --- this translates into $272 billion for the same year[1]. Though we don't know precisely how many hours of service volunteers perform collectively in the federation system, we do know that it would be impossible to achieve all that we do without the vital contributions of volunteers.

It is also critical to recognize that volunteers themselves are enriched by the opportunity to volunteer and to act on the values they hold dear. This underscores the community building aspect of volunteerism and the importance of developing meaningful and varied volunteer opportunities so individuals are able to give back and engage in *tikkun olam*. Many have remarked that, by volunteering, they get more than they give. Volunteerism also has an important community relations component. By reaching out to serve meals at a soup kitchen, engaging in interfaith advocacy efforts or serving on boards of other non-profits, the Jewish community can develop deep and meaningful ties with the non-Jewish community, counter anti-Semitism and improve security.

Finally, volunteerism can be a very effective means of engaging people who are otherwise unaffiliated or less affiliated in the Jewish community. People are often seeking ways to become involved in their local community and feel a sense of connection with others. By engaging volunteers in productive activities that match their interests, these individuals can become committed volunteers, ambassadors of the organization, communal leaders and donors. In fact, there is a strong connection between giving and volunteering households with volunteers give 117% more than households without volunteers.[2] There is also a very strong connection between religious involvement and philanthropic activity. People who regularly attend religious services are more likely to volunteer and those who give to religious and secular organizations give almost four times as much as those who give only to secular organizations.[3]

Overall, investing in volunteerism has numerous benefits to organization as volunteers:

- Bring new ideas and energy to the organization.
- Are excellent ambassadors for the organization among their own network of friends, colleagues, neighbors, etc.
- Serve as role models for others to become involved in service.
- Are likely to become contributors or increase contributions.
- Can strengthen Jewish communal impact.

43% of American Jews volunteer through an organization.

25% of American Jews volunteer through Jewish organizations.

NJPS 2000-01

Statistics

There is significant concern in North America today about the erosion of civil society, the lack of community connections and deterioration of volunteerism. However, there has been a renewed call to service and organizations are considering new models to engage volunteers.

In the 2004 study of volunteering in the United States, the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that the proportion of persons 16 and older who reported volunteering through an organization in the prior year (September 2003-September 2004) was 28.8%, representing 64.5 million people.[4] This percentage was the same in the prior year and up 1.5% from 2002. In Canada, a 2000 study of persons 15 and older found that 27% or 6.5 million volunteered in the prior year. This number represents a decline of 4% since 1997, yet is the same as figures from 1987. In 2000, volunteers contributed an average of 162 hours each during the year, up from 149 hours in 1997.[5]

According to the National Jewish Population Survey 2000-01 (NJPS), 43% of Jews 18 and older reported that they volunteered for an organization in the prior year.[6] Although the numbers are not directly comparable due to differences in methodology and age groups, it is notable that the data suggests that U.S. Jews are more likely to volunteer than Americans in general. Despite this promising sign, only one in four Jews volunteer for a Jewish organization over the course of the year.

In comparing the rates of volunteerism by various categories, many general trends remain consistent in the U.S., Canada, and amongst American Jews. Volunteerism seems to be lowest amongst the oldest age cohort, women are slightly more likely to volunteer than men, and rates of volunteerism increase with education level and income level. From the NJPS report, households with children under 18 had the highest rate of volunteerism and single elderly households had the lowest rate of volunteerism.

Comparison of Volunteers by Age, proportion who volunteer

General Population			US Jews – NJPS		
Age	**United States**	**Canada**	**Age**	**Volunteer**	**Volunteer Jewish Orgs**
15-24	24%	29%	18-34	45%	22%
25-34	26%	24%			
35-44	34%	30%	35-49	47%	29%
45-54	33%	30%	50-64	45%	27%
55-64	30%	28%			
65+	25%	18%	65+	34%	22%
All	*29%*	*27%*	*All*	*43%*	*25%*

Volunteers are not paid because they are worthless, but because they are priceless.

Unknown

One of the findings from the NJPS report is the relative likelihood of volunteering under Jewish auspices as compared to those who do no Jewish volunteering. Within the age groups, 18-34 year olds were least likely to volunteer under Jewish auspices and those 75 and over are the most likely to volunteer with Jewish organizations. Those who are married are most likely to volunteer with Jewish organizations and those never married are least likely to volunteer for Jewish organizations. Consistent with studies in the general community, those who attend religious services once a month are the most likely to volunteer and they are more likely to volunteer under Jewish auspices. Interestingly, the NJPS report also highlighted that in-married couples are most likely to volunteer Jewishly and intermarried couples are least likely to volunteer under Jewish auspices. This may suggest a need to do greater outreach to couples who are intermarried to encourage their participation in Jewish volunteerism and presents an opportunity to engage the less affiliated through service.

Motivation

In thinking about how best to maximize the use of volunteers, it is useful to understand why people give their time and talent in service of others. Motivations for volunteering can range from person to person, but there are some common themes. Many are motivated to "make a difference" and want to contribute to improving the quality of life in their communities and helping others. Others may volunteer as a way to expand their social networks and develop connections with others in their communities. Some volunteer in order to develop new skills and prepare them for future employment. Still others may volunteer as part of a school requirement or obligation due to a penalty. Understanding what motivates the volunteer and what they are seeking will help organizations to match volunteers with appropriate opportunities.

According to the Independent Sector report, *A Nation of Givers*, the most influential factor affecting the volunteering rate is being asked to volunteer. In fact, their study found that 64% of those asked to volunteer do so as compared with 26% who volunteer without being asked. Though it seems to be simple and intuitive, it is not something our system has done in a systematic way. The federation system has developed a fairly systematic approach to asking people to give money, but has not been as systematic about asking community members to give their time.

types of volunteerism

vol·un·teer

noun:
a person who performs a service voluntarily

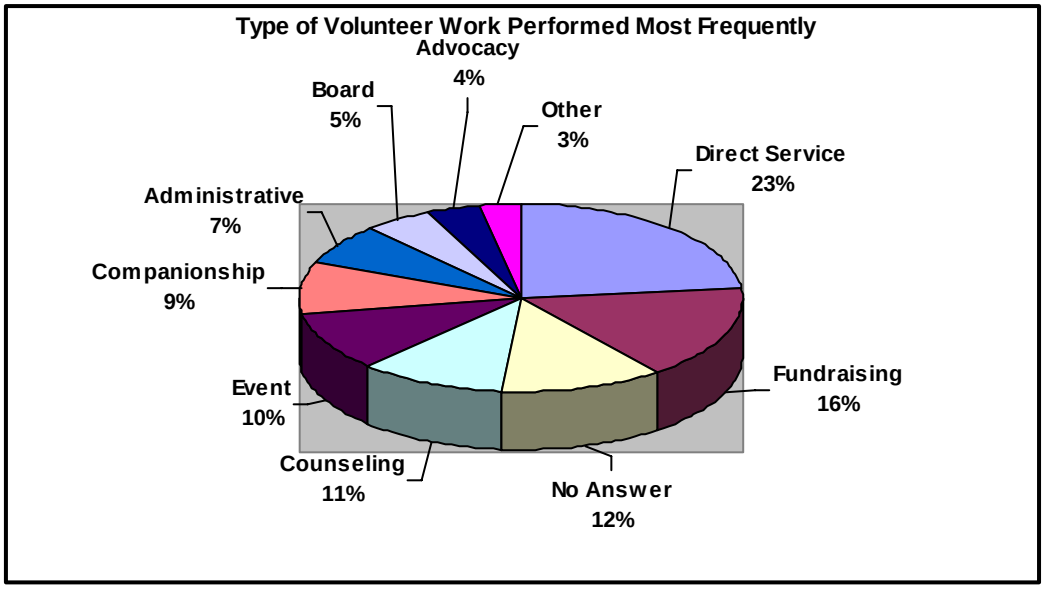
verb:
to perform a service of one's own free will

As discussed earlier, UJC's Volunteerism Task Force developed its own categories for various types of volunteer service. They are:

- **Governance –** those who serve on boards and committees and focus on policy decisions, planning and fundraising.
- **Hands-on –** those who provide direct services to meet client or organizational needs (i.e., friendly visitors, food pantry staffing).
- **Management Assistance** - those who utilize their professional expertise on behalf of the organization (i.e., pro bono legal advice, developing marketing materials, etc.).
- **Advocacy** – those who further an organization's agenda through community relations work and advocacy at the local, state or national level.

While there are distinct opportunities and challenges involved in each type of volunteer activity, there are also essential commonalities. There is also a recognition that individuals can be engaged in various types of volunteer activity and may have different motivations for each. Additionally, we envision a continuum of volunteer service wherein an individual providing her professional expertise may become interested and engaged in advocacy work and another who is volunteering as a friendly visitor may become involved in board or committee work.

The following chart describes the most frequent type of volunteer work by those who volunteer based on a 1998 study of United States volunteers. Although the categories are somewhat different, we can determine that hands-on service is the most frequent and advocacy the least frequent.



Source: The Independent Sector, *Giving and Volunteering in the United States*, 1999

How wonderful is it that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.

Anne Frank

There are multiple ways in which volunteers may seek to engage with organizations. Some of the methods are explored below:

Episodic

According to the Independent Sector, there is an increasing preference for short-term episodic volunteering, with 41% of those who volunteered engaging in one-time or sporadic activity. Similar findings have been reported for Canada. Although organizations are accustomed to and prefer volunteers who commit to an ongoing assignment, this model is losing ground to those who are unable or unwilling to commit to one organization for ongoing service. This trend provides challenges to recruitment and training and may shift the notion of retention to one that positions the agency to be a likely choice for a volunteer's future activity. Some experts suggest we shift the paradigm from volunteers as unpaid staff to volunteers as consultants who perform time-limited work.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

JCRC of Greater Boston organizes an annual Jewish Community Advocacy Day at the State House in Massachusetts. The goal of this day is to mobilize the Jewish community through synagogues, day schools, and social services agencies to come to the state house and meet with legislators on issues of primary communal concern. The issues are selected by our volunteer-led Public Policy Committee through a process of reviewing and analyzing areas of concern to priority groups. Over he past several years these have largely included services to: New Americans, women and children, and the elderly. Hundreds of volunteers come for a morning of community-building and political activism. Team leaders are trained and assigned to lead delegations according to their senatorial districts. They advocate on specific, pre-chosen issues then write-up the responses of their legislators so tracking can take place. It is an excellent way to bring together young and old, new Americans and veteran residents, synagogues and day schools. **(www.jcrcboston.org)**

Ongoing

As indicated above, volunteer managers desire ongoing volunteers who can be trained and will meet the volunteer needs reliably and consistently. Despite a trend toward episodic volunteering, there are also volunteers who desire a volunteer placement that allows them to develop skills and form ongoing relationships with staff, other volunteers, and clients.

I long to accomplish a great and noble task, but it is my chief duty to accomplish small tasks as if they were great and noble.

Anne Frank

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The **Jewish Community Federation of Louisville** has developed a three-tier leadership development program for the community.
LEADS (Leadership Education and Development Series) is an introductory program comprised of four sessions that educate young adults on the organized Jewish community.
YLD (Young Leadership Development) is a two-year program for individuals who want to take on more volunteer and leadership responsibility in the community. The first year of the program is spent exploring issues such as our Jewish identity, Planning and Allocation Process, overseas needs and Jewish models of leadership. The second year of the program is spent as an intern on one of our local Jewish agency boards.
Livnot Leadership (Building Leadership) is a 9-session program whose participants are current committee and board members of our local agencies and congregations. The participants engage in sessions that will strengthen their leadership skills enabling them to rise to key roles within their organization. Session topics include: Reading and Understanding a Non-profit Financial Statement, The Role of the Professional and Volunteer, How to Lead an Effective Meeting. (www.jewishlouisville.org)

Intensive Service

Intensive or "term of service" volunteering refers to full time volunteer projects which range anywhere from one week to one year. These programs generally require some travel and can be based in North America or abroad. Within the Jewish community, The Jewish Coalition for Service (www.jewishservice.org) serves as a coordinating body for over 40 Jewish intensive service programs such as Avodah and American Jewish World Service. These programs target different groups and interests from youth doing urban anti-poverty work in the U.S. to health care professionals providing vital health care in developing countries. An emerging trend in the general community is "volunteer vacations" where people take their vacation and travel to provide service for a week to two weeks. Several of these types of programs are offered within the agencies involved with the Coalition

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

OTZMA is a service-based leadership development program offering young adults ages 20-26 the unique opportunity to contribute and acquire an in-depth understanding of Israel and the Jewish people. Participants gain an "insider's" perspective while working and learning in three consecutive and distinct tracks, including immigrant absorption, areas of urban renewal, social service work experiences and kibbutz. (www.ujc.org/otzma)

Tell me
and
I'll forget.

Show me
and
I might
remember.

Involve me
and
I'll understand.

Unknown

Service Learning

Service learning pairs an educational curriculum with service projects to enhance understanding through experiential learning and to expand insight into why the service is being performed. For example, spark: Partnership for Service (www.sparkpfs.org), partners with other organizations to enhance Jewish service programs and incorporates service learning as a central theme. spark emphasizes that "Jewish tradition has always integrated learning and action; study is integrated into prayer, and prayer and study are sustained by work and action. As it is written in the *Pirkei Avot:…The world stands on three things: Torah (study), Avodah (worship), and Gemilut Hasidim (acts of loving kindness)…*"

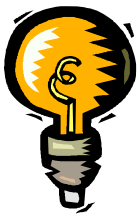
PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

spark: Partnership for Service developed the Heart**Action** program and partners with Jewish community organizations to implement the program. Following the traditional values of *bikur holim* (visiting the sick) and *hidur p'nei zaken* (honoring the elderly), Heart**Action** is a Jewish service learning program that involves participants in a transformational life experience by engaging them as a community in meaningful ongoing community service to the elderly. As relationships grow though a process of weekly visits, reflection sessions, text studies, guided journal activities and personal encounters, participants come to better understand themselves and their place within the world and their power to change it. (www.sparkpfs.org)

Virtual Volunteering

A new mode of volunteering sometimes referred to as "virtual volunteering" utilizes online technology to engage people who may not be able to volunteer in person due to travel limitations, work or school schedules and disabilities. It also appeals to those whose talents are in technology or who feel more comfortable engaging with others online. Such programs include email friendship projects matching online volunteers with an "e-buddy" with a disability; and support for women on bed rest due to high-risk pregnancies which reduces isolation and allows women to gain insight from others who have been in similar situations.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT



DOROT, a UJA Federation of New York beneficiary agency, operates an innovative program called University Without Walls. Using telephone conference calls, DOROT brings learning, laughter, friendship and support to people in their homes. Volunteers are able to teach classes over the telephone & connect virtually with people in their community. (www.dorotusa.org)

It is not fair to ask of others what you are not willing to do yourself.

Eleanor Roosevelt

Management Assistance

While the use of professional expertise on a pro bono basis is not a new concept in the federation system, it is an area that could be greatly enhanced through promotion and cultivation. Not only can these volunteers provide services that would otherwise be costly to purchase, the opportunity to volunteer could be a means to engage individuals who may not be interested in governance or direct service.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

The **Management Assistance Program** operated by the UJA Federation of New York is an excellent example of how to engage professionals in this type of volunteer work. The program recruits professionals in many fields ranging from advertising to graphic design to program evaluation. These volunteers are screened to better understand their skills and match them to a Jewish agency or synagogue that requires their expertise. (www.ujafedny.org)

Service Exchange

An innovation that seems to be gaining some ground in recent years is the concept of exchange of service wherein people provide hours of service in exchange for service. It is predicated on the notion that everyone has something to contribute and that by creating an opportunity to give, people can feel better about receiving help.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

JDC's **Time Bank** program creates a community-based network of volunteers and organizations who "donate" their time and abilities to people in need and, in return receive goods or services they need. It operates on the following principles:

- Everyone's time is equal – deposits are measured according to "hours of service".
- The value of all services is equal.
- Anyone is able to offer and receive help.

The program is currently operating in two communities in Jerusalem and is a partnership between JDC, the Jerusalem municipality, local community centers and the Jerusalem Foundation. (www.jdc.org)

who volunteers?

As we saw in the section about volunteerism trends, people of all ages and population segments volunteer their time. The following section describes the various age groups and types of people who volunteer and explores some of the interests, barriers and benefits with each of these groups.

We must view young people not as empty bottles to be filled, but as candles to be lit.

Robert H. Shaffer

Youth

Although today's youth are often described as self-interested and unconnected, the past decade has seen significant growth in the number of youth who are volunteering, due in large part to required service programs as part of school and religious organizations. Not only do youths provide a rich source of volunteer time, the habits and experiences in their youth are likely to carry into their adulthood. In a recent study, it was found that adults who volunteered when they were younger were twice as likely to volunteer as adults than those who did not volunteer as youth. This suggests that "the seeds of helping planted in youth today will grow into a lifelong journey of involvement and engagement."[7] Though a strong case can be made for youth volunteer programs, there are practical challenges and opportunities. In fact, many federation volunteer programs report that they receive inquiries from Jewish youth seeking to fulfill community service requirements from school or bnai mitvah preparation, but are often unable to place them in Jewish organizations due to few existing compatible opportunities. It is essential to invest in volunteer programs to engage youth in service and Jewish communal involvement that will pay dividends now and in the future.

- *Benefits:*
  - Bring energy and enthusiasm
  - Willing to try new things
  - Can bring a different perspective
  - Quick to learn
- *Barriers:*
  - Days/hours available are inconsistent with agency hours
  - Certain positions require greater life skills or maturity
  - Youth volunteers need supervision
- *Solutions:*
  - Be creative about ways to involve youth
  - Use peers to outreach, train and mentor youth
  - Match skills of youth to organizational needs
  - Provide appropriate training and supervision
  - Utilize web and other technology in recruitment
  - Consider bringing teens together to volunteer so it is both a community service project and social opportunity
  - Use older youth to work with younger children
  - Understand that youth may seek different ways to engage as volunteers than adults
  - Involve youth in the project development and planning

In American society today, we need to have volunteerism. I truly believe that it is the glue that will hold us together and it will be the energy that will take us into the 21st century.

U.S. Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD)

Young Adults

In addition to the typical motivations for volunteering, young adults often seek volunteer opportunities as a means of meeting others in their peer group and view volunteering as a mechanism to expand contacts or gain experience for their careers. Some Jewish singles organizations such as JDate (www.jdate.com) have specifically coupled service projects with singles socials to provide a more natural environment for connecting.

- *Benefits:*
  - Can bring enthusiasm and fresh ideas
  - May have more flexible schedules to volunteer
- *Barriers:*
  - For those away at college, they may feel less connected to their local community
  - Limited time due to school and work
  - May be more difficult to find and less likely to affiliate
- *Solutions:*
  - Reach out to young adults in places and with media most likely to reach them (coffee shops, online, radio stations, etc.)
  - Provide social opportunities with volunteer experiences
  - Create volunteer opportunities that allow volunteers to develop new skills which may help with their careers

Adults

Of all age groups, adults volunteer at the highest rate, with married couples ranking the highest within this subgroup. Despite the multiple demands of work, children and parents, adults are most likely to find the time to engage in service. A recent trend to involve adult volunteers is to partner with businesses to promote volunteerism and to offer flexible schedules or time off to volunteer.

- *Benefits:*
  - Large population to draw from
  - Adults bring maturity, experience and possibly the resources of their employer
- *Barriers:*
  - Work schedule limits time availability
  - For non-affiliated, uncertain where to become involved
- *Solutions:*
  - Create more volunteer opportunities during non-work hours
  - Seek to partner with businesses to reach out to new volunteers
  - Explore opportunities for online "virtual volunteerism" such as doing research, providing support or mentoring children

This new generation (of older adults) are not going to be enticed by opportunities just to stay busy.

We're going to have to provide work that captures people's imagination and really uses their skills.

Marc Freedman

Older Adults

Adults over 65 and the baby boomers who will begin retiring in 2011 present the greatest opportunity for increases in volunteer activity. This generation of seniors is highly educated, has tremendous professional expertise and will enjoy a longer lifespan than any previous generation. Currently, those over 65 are less likely than other age cohorts to volunteer for organizations. However, when they do volunteer, they are more likely to volunteer on a regular basis and for more hours than other age groups. A recent study by the George Warren Brown School of Social Work found that volunteering had a positive effect on the well-being of older Americans and that, in addition to the increased social connections, the "volunteer role may augment power, prestige and resources, and it might heighten the sense of identity."[8] In his book, *Primetime: How Baby Boomers Will Revolutionalize Retirement and Transform America*, Marc Freedman makes the case for viewing the burgeoning senior population as a social asset, and suggests that we must seek better ways to create the "match between the untapped resources of older Americans and the needs of American communities." Indeed, retired seniors, who have available time, particularly during hours when others may be consumed with work activities, can be a huge source of volunteer support for Jewish communal services.

- *Benefits:*
  - Seniors often have more available time to volunteer
  - Older adults who are retired give 50% more hours of service than those who are working
  - Seniors have vast and diverse experiences that can be utilized in volunteer work
  - Service can enhance the well being of the senior by increasing social connections and feelings of productivity
- *Barriers:*
  - Seniors are not always asked to volunteer due to perceived limitations
  - Bias toward "traditional" volunteer activities for seniors (program registration, office work).
  - Those who do not drive may find it difficult to get to volunteer sites
- *Solutions:*
  - ASK older adults to volunteer
  - Give older adults meaningful jobs that utilize their skills, talent and professional background
  - Provide opportunities for volunteers to form relationships with staff, other volunteers and clients
  - Be creative about volunteer opportunities close to their homes (i.e., neighbor friendly visiting programs)
  - Help coordinate transportation for seniors who do not drive

Everyone can be great because anyone can serve.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

People with Disabilities

Many organizations have developed successful programs to engage people with disabilities in service. Many individuals with disabilities report that they are not asked to volunteer since many assume they are in need of service, not capable of giving service.[9]

- *Benefits:*
  - Expands pool of potential volunteers
  - Increases others' understanding of people with disabilities
  - Offers the opportunity for those who may receive help to be able to give back to others
- *Barriers:*
  - Limited perceptions of ability of people with disabilities
  - Sites may not be accessible or duties may not be appropriate
  - No transportation available to get to volunteer locations
- *Solutions:*
  - Involve people with disabilities in your planning committee
  - Ensure that volunteer activities are offered in an accessible location or accommodations are provided as appropriate
  - Explore the use of virtual volunteering
  - Devise appropriate opportunities based on volunteer ability

Families

Just as adults who volunteered as youth are more likely to continue in volunteer roles, those who witnessed their parents volunteering are more likely to engage in volunteer activities with their own families as "the spirit of engagement passes from generation to generation."[10] There is a recent emphasis on family volunteering as evidenced by new programs geared to family engagement such as National Family Volunteer Day each November sponsored by the Points of Light Foundation.

- *Benefits:*
  - Creates an intergenerational "cycle of service" over time
  - Allows families to engage together in meaningful activity
  - Provides more service than one person alone
  - Builds extended family with other volunteering families
- *Barriers:*
  - Difficulties in scheduling
  - Finding opportunities that adults and children can do together
  - Perceived loss of personal or leisure time
  - Resistance of older youth to volunteering with parents
- *Solutions:*
  - Conduct outreach and promote concept of family volunteering
  - Create appropriate volunteer opportunities for families

Some of the most cost effective dollars we can invest may be in a volunteer manager, who can generate far more value from volunteer hours than we ever invested.

Bruce Esterline
VP for Grants
Meadows Foundations

Volunteers are a critical resource in most non-profit organizations. A recent study of charities found that two-thirds indicated that their volunteers "provide substantial cost-savings and greatly increase the quality of service provided."[11] Unfortunately, most non-profit organizations have a difficult time providing adequate resources to support and sustain volunteer programs.

Effective volunteer management is an essential component of any successful volunteer endeavor, but many organizations don't adequately fund or support volunteer management. It has been suggested that volunteer managers be similarly situated and staffed as human resources managers as they perform similar functions – one with paid staff and the other with volunteers. Volunteer managers must keep abreast of the trends in volunteerism and be afforded professional development opportunities.

Best Practices

The literature on volunteer management has cited the following nine "best practices:"

- Regular supervision and communication with volunteers
- Liability coverage or insurance protection for volunteers
- Regular collection of information on volunteer numbers and hours
- Screening procedures to identify suitable volunteers
- Written policies and job descriptions for volunteer involvement
- Recognition activities, such as award ceremonies, for volunteers
- Annual measurement of the impacts of volunteers
- Training and professional development opportunities for volunteers
- Training for paid staff in working with volunteers

A recent study by the Urban Institute found that many of these best practices are not adopted in most non-profits whether large or small.

Capacity Building

In assessing how non-profits could build their capacity in volunteer programs, several common themes emerged. They include:

- Utilization of one-year, full-time volunteer with living stipend (AmeriCorps or similar)
- Funding to cover expenses of volunteer program
- More information about people in the community who want to volunteer
- Greater availability of volunteers with special skills
- Training or professional development for volunteer coordinators
- Reduction of regulatory, legal or liability constraints[12]

The best prepared and most effective volunteer programs are those with paid staff members.

Urban Institute

Key Steps

The following represent some of the key steps in the process of volunteer management identified by the Volunteerism Task Force.

Job Design - Determine how you plan to use volunteers and develop volunteer job descriptions setting forth roles and responsibilities.

Recruitment - Reach out in a variety of ways to recruit volunteers – general recruitment through the media and internet to reach wide distribution; targeted recruitment of volunteers with special skills by connecting with business groups; network recruitment using your volunteers, staff, clients, etc to reach out to potential volunteers.

Screening/Interviewing - Interview the volunteer and convey the message that you value the volunteer's time and desire to make the best match for his/her volunteer interests. Ask the prospective volunteer about his/her interests, skills, background and availability.

Placement - After meeting with the volunteer, determine where he/she will be placed and discuss mutual expectations. Consider the development of a written agreement describing volunteer responsibilities and timelines and organization responsibilities and support.

Training - Include both an overall orientation to the organization as well as specific training focusing on the duties and responsibilities of the particular volunteer position.

Supervision - Allocate time for ongoing volunteer supervision and include the opportunity to discuss issues as they may arise. Just as employees need supervision, volunteers require supervision. The level and intensity of the supervision depends on the work performed and experience of the volunteer.

Retention - Create an organizational culture that is welcoming and supportive of volunteers. Let them and others know they are critical to the mission of the agency. Much has been written about staff retention yet many volunteers do not continue because of poor management, assignments that they don't find meaningful or feeling that they are not valued for their work.

Recognition - Say "thank you" and notice and compliment a volunteer for a job well done. Recognition events should aim to include key staff and stakeholders so it is an organization-wide event. Volunteer awards or volunteer highlights in newsletters can also be effective mechanisms to make volunteers feel better about their contribution and the organization.

investing in volunteerism

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead

Volunteers can and do provide an extremely valuable source of time, energy and talent without receiving monetary compensation. However, it is crucial to remember that volunteer programs are not free. As with most things of value, in order to have a successful volunteer program, an organization must invest in volunteers. Recruitment, placement, training and supervision of volunteers are critical to effective programs and continued involvement of volunteers.

Although an organization may desire to increase its utilization of volunteers, it is important to assess the organization's capacity to absorb additional volunteers and use them effectively. In fact, many volunteer programs turn away volunteers because they recognize that it is worse to accept volunteers that you cannot effectively manage or involve, than to turn away a potential volunteer and refer them elsewhere. Generally, those who turn away volunteers do so because they lack sufficient organizational capacity, not because there are no unmet needs.[13]

In order to estimate and plan for the necessary investment in volunteers, many researchers and organizations have attempted to quantify an average cost of volunteers. However, this is not as easy as it may appear as the amount of training and supervision can vary tremendously from one volunteer type to the next. It is also true that 21st century volunteers cost more than in previous years due to the likelihood that the volunteers are employed, have limited time availability and desire more immediate gratification. They seek "short term assignments with a high level of personal reward."[14] When assessing the cost of starting or maintaining a volunteer program, it is important to consider both the direct and indirect costs of the program. Most volunteer program budgets include paid volunteer managers, marketing expenses, training programs and recognition events. However, most fail to include the costs of departmental staff who supervise volunteers, costs of space or insurance.

With the prospects of further government cutbacks and limited philanthropic dollars, there is a reasonable likelihood that greater pressure will be placed on the federation system to provide human services. Investment in volunteer programs can help us meet this challenge by increasing our capacity to deliver vital services and engaging more members of the community in service.

Do not be wise in words, be wise in deeds.

Jewish proverb

Following are a few of the basic steps required to develop a volunteer program in the community:

Needs Assessment
In order to begin planning for a volunteer program, the important first step is to determine what needs the program would fill, how the use of volunteers fits within the agency's mission, strategies and goals and how volunteers will be used. Information should be collected from key stakeholders including staff, clients, current volunteers and lay leaders.

Building Support
The case needs to be made and articulated as to why a volunteer program is necessary in the community. In order for the program to be successful, there must be support from key lay and professional leaders.

Volunteer Advisory Committee
A committee of key lay leaders should be established to guide the development, implementation and evaluation of the program. This committee can help promote the program in the community and support the program within the organization.

Community Partnerships
The committee should survey the community to discover which community agencies, synagogues and programs are potential partners either in volunteer placement or recruitment. Bringing them into the process in the early stages can improve program design and increase the likelihood of collaborative relationships going forward.

Resource Development
As discussed earlier, volunteers bring value to an organization, but they are not free. Organizations must commit to a reasonable investment for staffing, marketing and other essentials. Possible external funding sources include: foundations (capacity building grants), government grants, United Way and individual donors.

Implementation Strategy
A plan for launching the program should be developed. Consider whether the program can be launched in phases. Promote the program via a variety of media (newspapers, email, community meetings, etc.)

Evaluation
The evaluation plan should be completed during the program planning. It is important that measures of success and mechanisms for gathering data be established at the outset. What outcomes are you seeking? A greater number of volunteer hours served? Greater engagement of volunteers in other community activities? Broadening of donor base?

legal issues and liability

Do not separate yourself from the community.

Pirkei Avot

A common concern among non-profit organizations is coming to terms with the complex legal issues involved with the utilization of volunteers. The information provided in this section is intended as general background information and should not be construed as legal advice. It is also important to recognize that there is significant variation in law between the United States and Canada as well as among states and provinces.

In the United States, the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 (VPA) provides some protections for volunteers but it does not offer the non-profit any immunity from liability. Under the VPA, in order for the volunteer to be immune the following conditions must be met:

- Activity must have been in the scope of the volunteer's responsibility
- Volunteer must have any necessary certification or licensing
- Harm was not the result of conscious or willful misconduct
- Harm was not caused by the volunteer's operation of a motor vehicle

The Nonprofit Risk Management Center has a resource entitled *State Liability Laws for Charitable Organizations and Volunteers* which can be found by clicking on the following link.
(http://nonprofitrisk.org/pubs/PDFs/ssl_01rev.pdf)

The following are legal considerations relative to volunteer management. Since laws vary dramatically, these are listed as potential issues requiring further investigation:

- ✓ *Insurance* – Check with insurer to determine what coverage exists or is available for volunteer. Directors and Officers insurance is a fairly standard coverage for board members.
- ✓ *Motor Vehicles* – Generally volunteers driving their own vehicles are covered under their own insurance; some organizations have insurance riders to cover agency as secondary insured. Consult with insurer regarding volunteer driver of agency-owned vehicles. It is a good practice to ask volunteer for proof of insurance.
- ✓ *Volunteer Screening* – All organizations should conduct some type pf volunteer screenings; positions such as unsupervised client contact with vulnerable populations may require criminal background checks (online resource: www.volunteerselect.com)
- ✓ *Pemits, Licenses and Certifications* – Explore local requirements for permits as volunteers will often require the same certification as employees.
- ✓ *Injuries* – In some states, workers compensation coverage is extended for volunteers.
- ✓ *Child Labor* – State law may place restrictions on hours and hazardous duties or require licensing and parental consent
- ✓ *Anti-Discrimination* – May impact "hiring and firing" of volunteers

To the world, you may be one person. But to one person, you may be the world.

Anonymous

Legal Issues for Governance Volunteers

Fiduciary Duties, Sarbanes-Oxley: Implications for Federation Leadership
By Richard Wexler , Chicago, Illinois, Lord, Bissell & Brook, LLP
Vice Chair of United Jewish Communities

In the wake of the Enron, WorldCom, Hollinger and other scandals of these first years of the new Century, directors of public companies have found themselves under new and extremely heightened scrutiny, regulated by federal legislation. On almost a weekly basis, seminars across the country are convened on the implications of these new regulatory structures for non-profits. New State legislation in states from the West to the East Coast are now demanding more of us in the exercise of our fiduciary responsibilities as federation Board members, Officers and senior professionals. While the extent of the new standards varies from State-to-State, and applicable law is still evolving, and counsel should be consulted in each instance, it is clear to this writer, and to others, that the standards of the Sarbanes-Oxley 2002 legislation redefined our fiduciary responsibilities.**

Sarbanes-Oxley, or "SOX" has been described as "…the single most important piece of legislation affecting corporate governance…" in our history. Although clearly intended to regulate the governance of public companies, the leading students of this issue area believe that the standards set in that federal legislation will be applicable, as well, to not-for-profit corporations. It is clear that under the standards of SOX, if nothing else, officers and directors of federations and their agencies are going to be held to a higher standard of diligence than heretofore was the case and that means all of us have a higher standard applicable to us.
Among these "obligations" are the following:

- We must continue to act loyally, to make fully informed, good faith decisions with due care. This duty of exercising what is known as the "prudent business judgment rule" may be more carefully examined and more strictly defined so that our actions must be on an informed basis, in good faith with the care an ordinarily prudent person would exercise under the particular circumstances and in the manner that we believe to be in the best interests of the federation.
- No longer can we merely rely on the opinions, reports and financial statements of experts or even those whom we believe to be totally reliable – a greater degree of diligence is imposed upon us – objective evidence that, in fact, we made that informed, good faith, prudent business judgment in our decision.

** See, also, as an example, California's "Non-Profit Integrity Act of 2004" signed into law on September 30, 2004.

Service is the rent we pay for living. It is the very purpose of life and not something we do in our spare time.

Marian Wright Edelman

When courts have examined the "prudent business judgment rule," they have focused on three specific factors:

- ✓ Whether we possessed sufficient information concerning the decision;
- ✓ Whether we had the opportunity to and did, in fact, critically examine the information available to us;
- ✓ Whether we took sufficient, reasonable time to make an informed judgment and decision

This "duty of care" will require, among other things, where they do not exist, the creation of Audit Committees, supported by annual Certified audits. Imposed upon us is a duty of inquiry. The "duty of care" requires review and approval by the board of directors or, at the least, a broadly representative Compensation Committee, of the compensation paid to the chief executive officer and the chief financial officer.

Finally, every Federation and Agency must have in place the conflict of interest policy that requires full disclosure of any and all conflicts on the part of Officers, Board members and senior management. This is not a difficult requirement to meet but it is mandatory.

* * *

The United Way scandals nationally and among local chapters over the past decade, and the American Red Cross, and the Disabled American Veterans, support the thesis that major not-for-profits are as susceptible to fraud and malfeasance as are the public companies regulated by SOX. As one CEO of a public company has observed:

> *"It is my experience that a Board's role in the governance of non-profit organizations – both philanthropic and voluntary – is exactly the same as it is in for-profit corporations. This covers moral and legal responsibility, strategy determination, allocation of resources, goal-setting, evaluation of performance, rewarding and motivating management, making the tough decisions on top personnel, and being willing and available to assist in their areas of special experience. These Board roles are absolutely essential to the effectiveness of all public corporations – profit and non-profit."*

If SOX sets the standards, no longer can we as communal board members come to meetings unprepared. No longer can financial data be merely distributed at meetings with no opportunity for prior review. We are, as Federation and agency Board members going to be held to the same standard as Board members of public companies and that reality is upon us.

what's jewish about volunteerism?

The heart is revealed in the deeds.

Abraham Joshua Heschel

By Rabbi Louis Feldstein, Senior Managing Director, Practice Development Group, UJC Consulting

At the very core of Jewish identity is the premise that as partners in creation we have an obligation to make the world a better and stronger place. In our efforts at *Tikun Olam* ("repairing the world"), every Jew is enjoined to "not place a stumbling block before the blind"[1] and to assist the orphan and the widow.[2] The Torah teaches, "*Tzedek, tzedek, tirdof*"[3] ("Righteousness, righteousness you shall pursue)". In living a life committed to *Tzeddakah,* each Jew is commanded to fully engage in the community and aid those in need.

One important facet of connecting with the community and helping build for the future is volunteerism. When the first tabernacle was built in the desert, our ancestors were not commanded to bring a gift offering, but rather *yidbenu lebo*[4], to have gifts brought by those "*whose heart moves them*". This was the first act of volunteering.

For Jews, the two acts, *tzedakkah* and volunteerism are inextricably linked. Both actions are at the very core of Jews' responsibility to aid those in need, support the building of community and see the essence of the divine in each person whether poor or rich, meek or strong, humble or confident.

"Judaism views supporting the needy to be a duty imposed upon each person under the terms of the covenant with G-d. Unlike secular notions that see charity only as an act of individual free will, under Jewish law, individuals are obligated to provide for the community."[5] Whether performing acts of *tzeddakah* or volunteering, both actions are central facets of a Jews' role in perfecting the world and making it a more humane and holy place.

The great Rabbi Hillel wrote, "*al tifrosh min hatzibor*" "Do not separate yourself from the community"[6]. In volunteering to aid those in need and support our communities we not only connect with the community, we affirm the very essence of what makes each of us one who was truly created in the Divine image.

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[1] Lev. 19:14
[2] "At the end of three years you shall bring forth all the tithe of your produce in that year, and shall lay it up inside your gates...and the stranger, and the orphan, and the widow, who are inside your gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do." (Deuteronomy 19:28-29)
[3] Deuteronomy 16:20
[4] Exodus 25:2
[5] The Tzedakah Treasury, Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer (2000).
[6] Pirkei Avot 2:5

jewish federation volunteer programs

But where was I to start? The world is so vast. I shall start with the country I know best, my own. But my country is so very large. I had better start with my town. But my town too is large. I had better start with my street. No, my home. No, my family. Never mind. I shall start with myself.

Elie Weisel

There are numerous volunteer programs within federations and affiliated agencies that seek to recruit and engage volunteers. The following are examples of programs from a group of federation-based volunteer program in large and large intermediate cities. Most of these programs serve as a volunteer clearinghouses to match potential volunteers with opportunities within and outside the Jewish community. More details on these programs and contact information can be found at www.ujcinteroffice.org.

Community	Program Name	Budget	Department	Program Model	Staffing
Baltimore	Jewish Volunteer Connection	$225,000	Own dept	Volunteer clearinghouse/ programs	3 full time
Boston	Jewish Community Volunteer Program	$74,000	Planning	Volunteer clearinghouse	1 full time 2 part time
Chicago	JUF TOV Network	$250,000	Community Services	Volunteer clearinghouse/ programming	4 full time
Cleveland	Jewish Volunteers in Action	$108,000	Planning	Volunteer clearinghouse/ programs	2 full time
East Bay	Volunteer Action Center	$100,000	Own dept	Volunteer clearinghouse/ programs	1 full time 1 part time
New York	Hands On Program	n/a	Volunteer & Leadership Development	Volunteer clearinghouse	2 full time 30+ team leaders
Northern NJ	Tikkun Olam Initiatives	2003	JCRC	Volunteer clearinghouse/ programs	3 part time
Miami	Jewish Volunteer Center	$41,000	Leadership Development	Volunteer clearinghouse	1 part time
Metrowest	Jewish Outreach & Involvement Network	n/a	Information & Referral	Volunteer clearinghouse	1 full time
Philadelphia	Mitzvah Project	n/a	Community planning	Volunteer programs	1 full time
San Francisco	Volunteer Placement Project	$160,000	Information & Referral/ Marketing	Volunteer clearinghouse	1 full time 1 part time
Vancouver	Shalom BC Volunteer Centre	$53,000 CAN	Information & Referral	Volunteer programs	1 part time

One is not born into the world to do everything but to do something.

Henry David Thoreau

Since it is not feasible to describe each of the programs adequately within these communities, we have included some selected projects to highlight below.

Baltimore Jewish Volunteer Connection - HeartAction

Following the traditional values of *bikur holim* (visiting the sick) and *hidur p'nei zaken* (honoring the elderly), Heart**Action** is a Jewish service learning program that involves teenagers in a transformational life experience by engaging them as a community in meaningful ongoing community service to the elderly.

Heart**Action** is built on a semester schedule designed for middle and high school-aged participants. It can also be used with families, organizations, and groups. The program includes weekly visits to a nursing home of one hour followed by 30 minutes of reflection and Jewish learning. Participants visit in groups of 5-15 with support from a facilitator. Participants are provided with a number of strategies for building relationships with nursing home residents. Following each week's visit, the group meets to explore individual and shared experiences through reflection. Discussions are sparked with multimedia reflection tools including movie clips, art projects, photography, journal writing and texts, both Jewish and secular. This additional learning component allows participants to process their experiences and begin to explore Jewish values and identity.

In 3 years in Baltimore, Heart**Action** has engaged more than 50 students, including a leadership core of 11 students, many of whom are doing the program for the fifth or sixth time. This year, with the help of four AmeriCorps members (through our Heart**Action** Corps program,) JVC hopes to expand the reach of Heart**Action** into the public and private middle and high schools and reach even more currently unaffiliated teens. This year's goal is to engage more than 70 teenagers in service through the Heart**Action** program.

The community response to Heart**Action** has been positive. The challenge of ongoing service is the time commitment, but nearly all Heart**Action** participants report that they want to continue volunteering after the conclusion of the program, as evidenced by the developed of the leadership core of Heart**Action** alumni.

It is not what one says, but rather what one does, that makes a difference in the world.

Pirke Avot

New York: UJA Federation Companions

Donating Time to Neighborhood Seniors - UJA-Federation Companions was built on the results of the NY Jewish Community study that showed that 44% of seniors (75+) in the New York Jewish community are homebound/ isolated. This initiative is designed to address the need of these homebound seniors through highlighting the existing programs in our Network agencies, drawing attention to these programs, and sending volunteers to address this need in the community.

- **Ongoing relationship between volunteers and community-based senior adults:**

The face-to-face ongoing relationship is optimal for a homebound and/or isolated senior and the volunteer(s). The visits can be scheduled weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly and could include providing an escort for errands, helping to care for a senior's pet or accompanying a senior to a concert or performance. This project can be combined with phone calls, however face-to-face meetings are what make this project so special. This relationship gives the senior the opportunity to look forward to seeing the same friendly face/faces on a consistent basis. The volunteer will see the positive impact as well as feel the connection they are making in the lives of their senior companions each time they visit. For those with busier schedules, a small team of individuals can adopt a senior or a group of seniors and visit with them on a routine basis, so that 3-4 volunteers rotate their visitations and the seniors still can look forward to a consistent visit.

- **Ongoing residential project:**

While seniors living in residential facilities have their physical needs met by the staff, a face-to-face visit from a volunteer helps to address the emotional needs of the residents. A group of individuals can "adopt" a day each month to visit a community center at a Naturally Occurring Retirement Community, assisted living, or nursing home facility. Groups could help serve a meal, lead a discussion group, help celebrate holidays or escort seniors to Shabbat services.

- **One-time projects:**

Face-to-face interactions help seniors connect with volunteers on a personal level. Jewish holidays, and other special events, provide excellent opportunities for one-time projects. Volunteer Leadership Development Department will help customize a Hands On program that is appropriate for a group of volunteers. This could include delivering holiday food packages to homebound seniors or celebrating a Jewish holiday with seniors.

- **Distance Projects:**

Many seniors who need companionship are unable to accommodate visitors in their homes, or live in remote areas; reaching out to these seniors is still vital. A telephone companion project is an ideal way to connect them to an ongoing relationship. This opportunity could include weekly or bi-weekly telephone calls or teaching a class via conference call.

No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted…

Aesop

Northern New Jersey – Mitzvah Day

The JCRC of the UJA Federation of Northern NJ recently hosted its 7th annual Mitzvah Day on Sunday, November 7, 2004. Mitzvah Day is a one-day event that brings together over 1400 volunteers from every sector of the Jewish community at more than 40 sites in northern New Jersey. This day offers participants an opportunity to understand and experience first-hand the UJA-NNJ beneficiary agencies as well as the vast network of social service and environmental agencies in our area. Mitzvah Day is for all ages. Volunteers touch the lives of many people at projects including baking cookies and delivering them to nursing homes, cleaning up parks and nature reserves, running carnivals for seniors and for children affected by cancer, visiting group homes, and bringing friendly pets to visit the elderly.

This effort is overseen by the Director of Tikkun Olam Initiatives, a Mitzvah Day committee of the JCRC, and 2 lay co-chairs. Volunteers interested in playing a more active role on Mitzvah Day are invited to be site captains who serve as the liaison between the Mitzvah Day site and the volunteers who registered for that project. UJA-NNJ staff plays an important role as well in that they work in tandem with the site captains to ensure things run smoothly.

New York – Give a Mitzvah-Do a Mitzvah

Give a Mitzvah-Do a Mitzvah is a tzedakah program for young people getting ready to become b'nai mitzvah. Since its inception 18 months ago, 75 children in metropolitan New York have had a wonderful experience that has immeasurably enriched their *b'nai mitzvah* celebrations. The children, with their parents' encouragement, organized hands-on volunteering (one time and ongoing), and even had their parties on-site at these not-for-profit agencies, so that the agencies' clients could share in the *bar* or *bat mitzvah* celebration. In addition, they have selected philanthropic projects, and have supported these projects by contributing all or a portion of the monetary gifts they received in honor of becoming a *bar* or *bat mitzvah.*

I shall pass through this world but once. Any good therefore that I can do or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.

Mahatma Gandhi

Cleveland - Community-Wide Cemetery Preservation Project

Jewish tradition teaches that working to maintain a cemetery is a Chesed Shel Emeth – a true kindness – because it is done without the hope that the recipient will repay the action. On Sunday, August 29, 2004, more than **150 volunteers** representing **24 Jewish groups** performed a ***Chesed Shel Emeth*** **"true kindness"** at the Community-Wide Cemetery Preservation Project. Young children, youth group members, East-siders, West-siders, religious and secular, families and singles...all joined together to clean, weed, rake, trim hedges, inventory headstones and beautify Chesed Shel Emeth and Ridge Road II cemeteries. The goals of the event were:

- Community-building. To bring together more than 22 Jewish groups. *(Exceeded goal)*
- Tikkun Olam – To engage **150 volunteers** in acts of kindness and to prepare for the High Holy Days
- L'Dor V'Dor – To provide a multigenerational volunteer experience
- To educate about the Commission on Cemetery Preservation, the Jewish Community Federation, and our communal responsibility.

Six months prior to the event, the Jewish Volunteers in Action leadership presented its vision for a community-wide cemetery clean-up to the educational directors and many of the religious leaders of the community. An explanatory e-mail was distributed through the Rabbinical Council and youth groups and other organizations were contacted to participate. On the day of the event, 24 Jewish groups worked side by side.

In addition to Event Co-chairs (one representing JVA and one representing the Commission on Cemetery Preservation), an event committee was formed with representatives from the participating synagogues and organizations. Goal-setting, event planning, and marketing strategies were discussed and implemented. On the day of the event, committee members served as Team Leaders.

It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Chicago – JUF Uptown Cafe

The JUF Uptown Cafe, open since 1998, is Chicago's first kosher, mass-scale anti-hunger program. The Cafe was created to offer a sense of warmth and fellowship to those that are financially and socially in need. Cafe case management staff work with each guest to help them gain access to financial assistance, vocational counseling, support, other critical social services and community resources, thereby enabling them to be more self-sufficient.

At the JUF Uptown Cafe, volunteers serve restaurant-style meals. They act as waiters and waitresses, giving each guest food and drink choices. Volunteers help serve four hot meals (three dinners and Sunday brunch) each week to approximately 55-60 individuals at each sitting. Volunteers are also invited to visit with the guests during and after the meal. The "guests" range in age from small children to senior citizens.

- Volunteers must be 12+
- Twelve volunteers serve at each meal
- Forty percent of the Cafe's clients are Jewish
- Excellent volunteer opportunity for individuals, synagogue groups, youth groups, businesses, organizations, etc.
- Great B'nai Mitzvah project

The JUF Uptown Cafe is one of TOV's most popular volunteer opportunities. The Cafe allows volunteers to both nourish the bodies of each guest, while at the same time, nourishing their spirits. This interaction between volunteers and guests has made the JUF Uptown Cafe a huge success and a unique volunteer experience. Here is what one volunteer had to say about her family's experience:

"This was a great family experience. My children got a lot out of it and will remember it for a long time."

I wondered why somebody didn't do something. Then I realized, I am somebody.

Unknown

Miami – Mitzvah Miami

A community-wide annual hands-on volunteer day for high school teens. The event is planned by a committee made up primarily of teens who plan a volunteer project, select a Jewish speaker who provides educational context and recruit for the event. The program is in its 7th year and prior projects have included being ferried to an island for a coastal clean-up, gleaning vegetables from a field to donate to a food bank, refurbishing the grounds of a Jewish cemetery, creating a carnival at a homeless center, beautifying a school for emotionally handicapped students and renovating a JCC. Many of the committee members have had siblings who have been previous committee members and inquire about being involved in the planning committee. The volunteers receive community service hours and the committee members receive additional hours for the planning effort.

Baltimore JVC - Families First

A 1999 Baltimore Jewish Community Study found that the largest percentage of the community, 33%, were families with children living at home. In an ever increasing world of dual working parents, single parents, blended families, and non-traditional families, family volunteering is a great solution for the time-pressured, multi-tasking adult. Family volunteering is good for the families who do service, good for the community at large, and good for the organizations they serve. When it works right, families who volunteer together share the bond of a common interest and devotion to the same cause. It is a form of valued "quality time" between parents and their children.

Families First is a program that focuses on expanding the world through community service, building community, and reflecting Judaism's ability to guide us in caring for humanity. Through the **Families First** program, JVC addresses two needs in the Baltimore Jewish community: (1) The engagement of the family in meaningful service within a Jewish framework; (2) The growing need for volunteers in the Jewish and general community. This is accomplished by:

- Providing bi-monthly hands-on volunteer opportunities for families
- Creating a Jewish framework for all service
- Incorporating Jewish teachings and text into the service experience
- Offering opportunities for families to work with vulnerable populations, including the elderly and the homeless
- Inspiring a commitment to service
- Creating opportunities for families to grow together around the experience of service

Giving helps the giver as much as those to whom the gift goes.

It broadens the vision, and enlarges life. It cultivates love, sympathy, and kindness.

It develops nobility of character, and generosity of conduct.

Unknown

JEWISH RESOURCES

***spark*: Partnership for Service** (www.sparkpfs.org)
The mission is to inspire a commitment to service as an ongoing part of each person's life and an important expression of Jewish identity. ***spark*** works collaboratively with other Jewish organizations in developing resources, curricular materials, trainings and workshops, and programs to enhance and expand high quality Jewish community service. ***spark*** frequently uses a service learning model to enhance Jewish community service programs.

Weinberg Tzedek Hillel (www.tzedekhillel.org)
Seeks to pursue justice and transform communities. Weinberg Tzedek Hillel, an international public service effort sponsored by Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, is dedicated to transforming life on campus and in the community. Framed by the Jewish imperatives of tzedakah (righteousness), gemilut chasadim (acts of loving kindness), and tikkun olam (repair of the world), Weinberg Tzedek Hillel engages and empowers students in meaningful public service and encourages creative thinking when addressing social justice issues. In the process of bringing about meaningful social change, participants grow intellectually and spiritually. The four components are community partnerships, advocacy/awareness, service and education.

The **National Jewish Coalition for Literacy** (www.ncjl.net **)**
The organized Jewish community's vehicle for mobilizing volunteer tutors and reading partners for at-risk children in kindergarten through 3rd grade. Our mission is to bring the skills and the concerns of America's Jews to bear on the scandal of illiteracy by effecting a dramatic increase in the organized Jewish community's involvement in the fight against illiteracy and in the number of Jews involved in that fight.

The **Jewish Coalition for Service** (www.jewishservice.org)
The central clearing house for programs that enable people from high school through post-retirement to volunteer full time - for periods ranging from as short as one week to as long as one year. Term of service programs encourage volunteers to become more engaged citizens, and to live out the values of tzedek (justice), hesed (compassion), and tikkun olam (world repair). Service volunteers help others and transform themselves-having new experiences, meeting new people, learning new skills, seeing new possibilities.

American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (www.jdc.org)
The JDC Jewish Service Corps (JSC) is a unique one-year volunteer opportunity for active, enthusiastic, knowledgeable Jews to serve, and take part in the life of, a Jewish community abroad.

American Jewish World Service (www.ajws.org)
Independent not-for-profit organization founded in 1985 to help alleviate poverty, hunger and disease among the people of the world regardless of race, religion or nationality. It breathes life into Judaism's imperative to pursue justice and helps American Jews act upon a deeply felt obligation to improve the chances for survival, economic independence and human dignity for all people.

AVODAH: The Jewish Service Corps (www.avodah.net)
The Jewish Service Corps is a year-long program combining front-line anti-poverty work, Jewish study, and community building. It provides an opportunity for you to live out and deepen your commitments to Jewish life and social change through a year of work in low-income communities in New York City and Washington, DC.

Edah – Jewish Teacher Corps (www.jtcorps.org)
THE JEWISH TEACHER CORPS is an exciting initiative formed in response to the need for Judaic Studies teachers in North American day schools. THE JEWISH TEACHER CORPS will select 12 Fellows to teach in modern Orthodox and Community middle and high schools for a one-year term, beginning in September 2004.

The Jewish Agency for Israel – Amitim (www.amitim.org)
AMITIM (Hebrew for colleagues) is a hands-on movement in which a select group of North Americans and Israelis, ages 21-27, dedicate 7-9 months of service to underdeveloped Jewish communities in the Former Soviet Union. AMITIM volunteers work closely with community leaders from their host city to rebuild Jewish infrastructures, reaffirm Jewish identities, and establish a new paradigm for Israel-Diaspora relations. AMITIM offers volunteers a remarkable opportunity to reach deep into their personal resources and share of themselves. What participants gain in return is a powerful experience that will forever change the way they look at the world.

OTZMA (www.otzma.org)
A program of United Jewish Communities, Project Otzma is a ten month program designed to offer Jewish adults ages 20-25 (college graduates preferred) an opportunity to live and volunteer in Israel in a variety of settings.

PANIM: The Institute for Jewish Leadership and Values (www.panim.org)
The Center for Jewish Service-Learning seeks to help American Jews "live *Torah*" by providing them with: a vehicle for reaching out to those who are in need, and the Jewish language to understand how this behavior is the fulfillment of the prophetic mandate "to care for the stranger, the widow and the orphan" (i.e. the most vulnerable populations in our midst). By offering a vision of Judaism that understands community service as a primary Jewish act, this Center's programs both strengthen Jewish identity and encourage engaged and active American citizenship.

Union for Reform Judaism (www.urj.org)
Tzevet Mitzvot: Adult Mitzvah Corps provides an intensive experience of social action, study and worship.

GENERAL RESOURCES

U.S. Corporation for National and Community Service (www.cns.gov)

- Senior Corps
  - *RSVP* – program to recruit and engage people 55 and older in a broad range of community service activities
  - *Foster Grandparent Program* – geared towards low income individuals who are 60 and older to help children with exceptional needs
  - *Senior Companions Program* – a program utilizing low-income older adults to provide friendship and assistance to those in need.
- Americorps
  - *Americorps*National/State* – national program to place young adults in full-time volunteer projects for one year.
  - *Americorps*Vista* – a program placing young adults in non-profit organizations to engage in anti-poverty work.
  - *Americorps*National Civilian Community Corps* – A program utilizing young adults (18-24) in full-time service to strengthen communities and develop leaders through team-based national and community service.
- Learn & Serve America – makes grants to schools, colleges and non-profit groups to engage students in community service linked to academic achievement and the development of civic skills.

Canada Corps (www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/CanadaCorps)
Canada Corps is a way for Canadians to work together to promote good governance and institution-building in developing countries and fragile states.

Points of Light Foundation (www.pointsoflight.org)
An organization whose mission is to involve people more effectively in volunteer community service to help solve serious social problems. It also facilitates a national network of volunteer centers. In addition, it maintains a web portal to match volunteers and organizations: www.1-800-volunteer.org

VolunteerMatch (www.volunteermatch.org)
A non profit organization whose mission is to help individuals find appropriate volunteer opportunities and to assist non-profit organizations in finding interested volunteers.

Voluntary Sector Initiative (www.vsi-isbc.ca)
A unique undertaking between the Government of Canada and the voluntary sector to enhance their relationship and strengthen the sector's capacity.

Experience Corps (www.experiencecorps.org)
A program of Civic Ventures which mobilizes the time, talent and experience of adults 55 and over in service to their communities through tutoring and mentoring of children in urban public schools.

Independent Sector (www.independentsector.org)
A coalition of non-profits, foundations and corporations seeking to strengthen non-profits, philanthropy and citizen action.

Volunteer Canada (www.volunteer.ca)
To promote quality volunteerism to strengthen communities and develop capacity in the voluntary sector to engage citizens as volunteers.

Association for Volunteer Administration (www.avaintl.org)
An organization dedicated to providing resources and professional development for professionals who work with volunteers.

Energize, Inc (www.energizeinc.com)
An international training, consulting and publishing firm specializing in volunteerism.

Nonprofit Risk Management Center (www.nonprofitrisk.org)
The Nonprofit Risk Management Center was established to provide assistance and resources for community-serving nonprofit organizations. As a nonprofit, the Center is uniquely positioned to both understand and respond to questions with practical, affordable suggestions for controlling risks that threaten a nonprofit's ability to accomplish its mission.

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