

# **Recruiting Male Volunteers: A Guide Based on Exploratory Research**



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**by Stephanie T. Blackman  
National Service Fellow  
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## **Acknowledgments**

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I can hardly begin to express my gratitude to the multitude of people who have made this guide possible. The opportunity to delve into any topic with the freedom and independence that I have had this year is a rare one indeed, and for that reason my first thanks go out to the folks at the Corporation for National Service—namely Tom Flemming and the Core Management Team of the National Service Fellows program, including David Morton, Paula Cole Jones, Jeff Gale and Anna Ditto.

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reviewers and editors as well—their advice has molded the clarity and structure of this guide. To all of these people, and the many more who have helped along the way, thank you.

## Preface

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A poster hanging near the water fountain in my gym features a muscular woman lifting weights. The text reads, “Macho is not a gender thing.” Passing that poster on so many mornings before starting my work day, I have thought, “Neither is volunteerism.” And yet, when it comes to social service, female volunteers seem to be the norm, suggesting that perhaps volunteering *is* a “gender thing.”

The prevalence of female volunteers, however, is not necessarily universal or deliberate. As a National Service Fellow for the Corporation for National Service, I set out to explore which programs recruit male volunteers and why some are more successful than others in doing so, motivations for volunteering among men, and the possible impacts of an increased number of male volunteers doing social service work. My ultimate goal has been to enhance the field of service through a better understanding of male volunteers; this guide is my way of communicating to practitioners in the field the knowledge that I have gained.

You may be wondering: why bother? Understanding the issues surrounding male volunteerism in social services will do little good if you are not convinced that including male volunteers is important. Why does a volunteer’s gender matter if the quality of work is the same? Is it not acceptable to have a sphere in which women are the primary players? As I have progressed through this research, I have asked myself these questions time and again, especially when explaining my work to friends, family, and participants, whose reactions have ranged from intense interest to detached skepticism. The answer seems to be that in a field such as social service, volunteerism often signifies high-quality human interaction rather than a specific task that could be accomplished by anyone. Consequently, one volunteer can create a ripple effect that may influence an organization, a client population, public opinion, and other volunteers. Through this process, of course, a volunteer is often changed as well.

Indeed, the fact that my exploration of these issues has led to this recruitment guide reflects the stance I have taken on the importance of including male volunteers in social services. That position, however, may not hold true across the board, and I therefore encourage both conscientious and active reading of this guide. I have tried to facilitate your interaction with this text by periodically asking you to ask yourself questions, thereby personalizing the issues as much as possible.

Finally, as you work through the suggestions and resources of this booklet, bear in mind that these are not tried and true methods for recruiting male volunteers that will guarantee success in your efforts. Rather, this booklet should serve as a guide for your own

creativity and provoke your thoughts about how and why you recruit male volunteers. It would be my delight as a researcher if some of these ideas challenged or inspired you to test different strategies, comment on them, and report their effectiveness back to the field. The same hope applies to the assumptions I and others have made about the possible effects of recruiting male volunteers. Take nothing in this booklet at face value—for if the participants in my research have taught me anything, it is that each organization is different and the personalities and structures involved in any program will dictate successful recruitment of male volunteers as much as any single method offered here. Please discuss, share, and challenge these ideas with colleagues, administrators, and of course, your volunteers themselves. Good luck!

Stephanie Blackman  
Portland, Oregon  
July 1, 1999

## **Introduction:**

### **What you need to know before using this guide**

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#### ***Why recruit male volunteers?***

The decision to recruit male volunteers is not one that you should make lightly. Adding men to your pool of volunteers could have a variety of implications for your program, not all of which are positive. Understanding the potential impacts of a greater number of male volunteers may add to your excitement about this cause. The same understanding, however, should also call attention to the possibility that recruitment of male volunteers may not suit your program, may generate additional work for you or your co-workers, or may harbor unforeseen consequences. Legal discrimination or organizational policy issues must also be taken into consideration.

Indeed, the impacts of recruiting male volunteers are many and varied. Although individual social service programs will reach their own conclusions about the importance of recruiting men, the following are ten possible reasons for doing so:

1. Male volunteers expand an agency's base of donors, volunteers, in-kind services, and other support.
2. Male volunteers allow a social service program to serve more male clients or match them with male volunteers, or expand services.
3. A social service program benefits from the new or different ideas and feedback of male volunteers.
4. Male volunteers exemplify the ways in which men can do and be good, both for society at large and for clients who most often see men in negative contexts (as an abuser or disciplinarian, for example).
5. Male volunteers enhance the experience of clients who are more comfortable or have more fun with men.

6. Male volunteers demonstrate that a social service issue is not solely a “women’s issue” or a “men’s issue” but important to all.
7. Male volunteers benefit from increased knowledge or understanding of social service, which may help them cope with issues in their own lives (when an adolescent son or daughter becomes homeless, for example).
8. Male volunteers diversify the circle of people with whom volunteers can interact, work, and make decisions.
9. Male volunteers help to create an environment in which men are encouraged and expected to volunteer.
10. Male volunteers increase the number of people who are active players in social change.

Appendix A contains worksheets for assessing these possible outcomes and many more. The assessment tool may be particularly useful for readers who would like to explore in further detail the impacts of including male volunteers, or those who must convince others about the value of such an effort. The remainder of this guide will, for the most part, reflect an assumption that readers are interested in including men in volunteer programs and will focus on the strategies for doing so.

### ***What is the background of this project?***

National volunteer surveys such as those conducted by Independent Sector and The Gallup Organization suggest that the volunteer tendencies of men and women are actually not markedly different. The Independent Sector web site (<http://www.IndependentSector.org>) reports that in 1995, 45% of men volunteered.<sup>1</sup> My personal volunteer experience in several social service agencies and the observations of many acquaintances, however, indicate that male volunteers are few and far between. Even programs boasting a high number of male volunteers rarely seem to reach 50%. It was that experience, not the research report discussed above, that led to this study.

Furthermore, Gallup’s 1995 *Survey on Volunteering for Serious Social Problems* indicates that the main distinction between the activities that men and women choose for volunteerism is that more women volunteer in programs for children with learning disabilities or teen parents, and more men volunteer in alcohol abuse programs.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, there does not seem to be a scarcity of male volunteers in emergency and rescue services or on organizational boards of directors. The reasons for such distinctions are not clear, however.

Rather than challenge the numbers revealed by national surveys or assume that all social service programs need or want to recruit male volunteers, I have explored the issues surrounding male volunteerism so that those volunteer coordinators who do want to include more men have some concrete strategies to facilitate that process. In doing so, I have employed a few premises that permeate every aspect of the study and its subsequent recruitment guide. Although I held these beliefs when I began my research—they are what propelled me to this topic—my conversations and interviews over the past few

months, both within social service and outside of it, have reinforced those initial ideas. My assumptions are:

- 4 When volunteers are doing good for others, they are positive role models.
- 4 The influence of volunteers extends beyond their allotted time and work within an organization.
- 4 Men control or influence some resources (such as decision-making power and money) that could directly or indirectly affect an organization.
- 4 Gender is one aspect of diversity and is a source of identification, role modeling, and behavioral influence.

Think about these assumptions for a moment. Do you agree with them? Whether you answer “yes” or “no” will significantly affect your reading of this guide and how you conceptualize the recruitment of male volunteers. You do not need to be in complete agreement with all or any of them in order to include male volunteers in your program, but from my perspective, they are the reason that so many of the following pages are devoted to recruitment strategies. Although these assumptions may not be applicable throughout social services, they are the operating framework for this research and, as such, important considerations for readers.

### ***What kind of research led to this guide?***

My research methodology is likewise a significant factor in the interpretation of this study. The foundation of this guide is qualitative information gleaned from interviews with volunteer coordinators and male volunteers working in and for social service agencies. The interviews were casual in style, including mostly open-ended questions. If a participant made a point I found particularly interesting, I followed through with additional questions, even if they were not asked of other interviewees. Some points were answered through the natural course of conversation, making certain questions unnecessary in many cases. The ideas presented in this booklet are derived from the experiences of my participants. I have compiled and sorted them and contributed additional information when I thought it would be helpful.

Given my research methodology, I ask that readers take note of the following points to avoid confusion:

- ∇ Percentages and other numbers are provided to ground the ideas in the research results. Because of my conversational interview style, however, these data must be read carefully. If 18% of participants suggested a given strategy, for example, that does not mean that the other 82% disagreed with that idea. More likely is that they simply did not address that particular issue. When interviewees offered differing opinions, I note that fact in the text.
- ∇ Generally, I refer to anyone recruiting, “hiring,” or working with volunteers as **“volunteer coordinators.”** In choosing my research participants, I recognized

volunteer coordinators as paid professionals spending some portion of their time doing this kind of work.

- ∇ I consider “**male volunteers**” to be men currently providing direct social service through organized volunteer programs, or men who had done so recently. Included as “volunteers” were men who were receiving a stipend for their service.
- ∇ For this research and guide, I have considered “**social service programs**” to be those which work directly with clients (such as child, adult, elderly, homeless, disabled, incarcerated, immigrant and refugee populations). I worked with agencies providing a wide range of social services, including educational support, mentoring, recreation, care giving, counseling, advocacy, food and shelter aid, professional assistance, art and computer instruction, and health care. Indirect service, board and committee work, or volunteerism in environmental, political, or other causes were not the focus of this study, although many participants also had experience in those domains.

For more information about my research methodology, please refer to Appendix B.

### ***What is missing from this guide?***

First and foremost, I must stress that this research has been an exploration, and this guide a beginning. Scholars will not find a sociological study contained within these pages, and practitioners will not find guaranteed solutions. Nor is this booklet a treatise about the implications of male volunteerism on gender relations in the United States. Nevertheless, elements of research, practice, and theory seep into this guide, and it is their combination that I hope will instigate every reader to think about the great potential for further work on this topic. Appendix B also contains a list of suggestions for further research, and I encourage you to refer to it as a means of understanding the limitations of this guide, even if you are not a researcher yourself.

Moreover, it is important to note two factors affecting the content of this booklet. First, all participants were experienced with volunteerism in some way. My recruitment guide therefore lacks representation from people who *do not* volunteer, which would offer another perspective entirely on what strategies would be effective. Second, in order to uncover the aspects of volunteerism particularly relevant to recruitment of men, I asked participants to make judgments about male volunteerism or men in general, which could be perceived as an assumption that the issues of male and female volunteerism are distinct. They may not be, and many interviewees were reluctant to categorize their sentiments by gender. Consequently, the ideas of this booklet are often applicable to both men and women.

### ***Who should use this booklet?***

I have written this guide for volunteer coordinators, but I have tried to assume neither too much nor too little about the experience with volunteer recruitment that readers may

have. For some people, this guide will simply put a fresh spin on familiar ideas. For others, the recruitment strategies may be altogether new. Furthermore, this guide is intended for volunteer coordinators in the field of social service, and many of the concepts are specific to the nature of direct social service work. Nevertheless, I think many of the strategies for recruitment of men apply to work outside of direct social service, and even outside of volunteerism. I therefore hope that readers will take the pieces of this booklet that apply to them and share the information with anyone who might find it useful.

To that end, asking yourself a few questions could help you assess where your agency is in the process of recruiting men:

- 8 Do I have any male volunteers now? What is the typical ratio of male to female volunteers for my program?
- 8 Have I thought before about increasing the number of male volunteers in my program? Have I had administrative support in the past for recruiting male volunteers? What has brought male volunteers to my organization in the past?
- 8 Why might I want to have more male volunteers? What qualities do male volunteers offer that differ from female volunteers? For what roles and responsibilities do I want to recruit male volunteers?
- 8 Have I talked with anyone else in my organization about increasing the number of male volunteers?

The answers to these questions do not determine the utility of this booklet or your future success recruiting male volunteers. Having a sense of your experience with male volunteers, however, is a starting point to launch your reading and interpretation of the guide.

### ***Tips for readers***

My interviews with volunteer coordinators and male volunteers yielded an abundance of ideas surrounding male volunteerism in social service programs. From the potpourri of opinions and experiences emerged challenges to the recruitment of male volunteers and strategies for overcoming them, which form the basis of the guide.

Although each of those challenges and strategies arose in the context of discussions about male volunteerism, many of them are not unique to men. You may find that women are attracted as easily as men by some of the strategies offered here. Such strategies are included, however, because seeing them through the lens of *male* volunteer recruitment may be the perspective you need to successfully recruit the men you are missing now.

Of course, not every strategy will be useful to every volunteer coordinator. The work list below may help you determine which strategies are applicable to your situation, and which, in turn, should be postponed or set aside. As you read, keep these questions in mind:

- 8 Does this strategy apply to my organization?
- 8 How might I be able to tweak the principles of this strategy to fit my needs?
- 8 Have I tried this strategy before? How many times, or for how long? Has it worked? Why do I think it has or has not been a good strategy for me?
- 8 Are there any structural barriers (policies, budget, etc.) to implementing this strategy?
- 8 How might other staff respond to using this strategy? Clients? Current volunteers?
- 8 How realistic is this strategy for my situation?
- 8 How useful is this strategy in relation to others?

You may want to return to this list when you have finished reading to guide your next steps. I have also added some visual images to help you sort through the wealth of information contained in these pages. Look for these icons for quick reference about the material:



**Strategies:** This symbol alerts the reader of a strategy for recruiting male volunteers, along with an explanation of why it might work.

**Collaborative strategies:** Many of the ideas offered here involve collaboration with community partners. Because collaboration is often already happening or may require additional time to grow relationships, I have noted those strategies that utilize collaboration with this symbol.



**Great ideas:** While I hope that all of the strategies offered in these pages are useful, I want to call attention to a few ideas that I found to be particularly innovative or that show great potential for success. This symbol marks strategies that fit those criteria.



**Caveats:** Some concepts I do not endorse wholeheartedly because they entail some level of risk or controversy. In such cases, I warn the reader with this symbol and light gray shading around the explanation for why I use it.



**Reports from the field:** I have included these blocks of information to give the reader additional information about issues in service that may influence recruitment of male volunteers. They are distinguished from the rest of the text with dark gray shading and this symbol.

In addition, I ask that readers also note that quotations are the words of participants, taken as closely as possible from the transcripts of interviews. Speakers are identified only as “volunteer coordinator” or “male volunteer” to give context to their words while

protecting their anonymity. With these guidelines in mind, you are now ready to get to the heart of the matter—the challenges and strategies for recruiting male volunteers.

## Working with gender issues: A note about stereotypes

In writing this guide, I have been challenged to discuss the topic of male volunteerism while neither relying too heavily on stereotypes about men, nor ignoring the reality of gender roles in our society. I have been torn as an author and researcher about how to acknowledge the ways in which gender roles may inhibit male volunteerism, without cementing that fate in my naming of the problem. I likewise cannot dismiss the ideas of some participants because of their possible implications for gender relations.

Readers will therefore find that I have taken, in some ways, the easy way out, by leaving the interpretation of this material in terms of gender roles to you. I cannot presume to know your stance about traditional “masculinity” or “femininity,” or whether you even see human characteristics in such terms. I do, however, try to point out to readers specific strategies that involve deconstructing stereotypes or utilizing them as a means to an end.

When you use stereotypes, you walk a fine line between reinforcing their validity and showing how stereotypical traits can be used in non-stereotypical ways to do good. One male volunteer coordinator, for example, indicated that his “masculine” persona helped him recruit men:

*I mostly just try and show by example that...there are ways for guys to be really involved and still maintain some plausible social role in masculinity or whatever. I'm very fortunate in that I'm big and I ride a motorcycle and whatnot and I can do all these things that, that are traditionally sort of not for guys...so I'm lucky to be... a nice test case for guys. They look at me and they say 'Huh, well, you know, he's got a beard, he rides a motorcycle, he's a strong guy, but he also...wipes noses.' So I try to play that up...I try to present to them this apparent contradiction.<sup>3</sup>*

- volunteer coordinator

This recruiter was in essence demonstrating that the masculine characteristics that might appeal to men are not mutually exclusive with social service volunteering.

On one hand, you may have philosophical qualms about validating the concept of “masculinity” in order to attract male volunteers, or about taking advantage of some men’s unwillingness to step outside the box of traditional masculinity. On the other hand, you might find in doing so that you have set an example of how a “macho” man can be involved in a caring and committed relationship with your clients or of how social service can be blended with masculinity.

If you are unwilling to manipulate notions of stereotypical masculinity to your advantage or truly do not want the kind of volunteer who is attracted to certain images of masculinity, then some strategies are perhaps inappropriate for your program. You may choose, instead, to appeal to men who do not conform to

I do ask that you remain sensitive to gender implications as you read and implement the ideas in this guide. Thinking about the practical, theoretical, short and long-term effects of using certain strategies may also help you decide which ideas are best suited to your philosophy and your program.

## **Part I: Public relations and programmatic strategies**

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Perhaps the greatest and most obvious barrier to volunteer managers who would like to recruit more men is the seemingly overwhelming universe of gender roles and how men and women are socialized. Forty-two percent of participants mentioned aspects of socialization as factors in the often meager number of men in direct social service volunteerism (or social service employment, for that matter). The first two chapters therefore address some ways in which societal expectations might affect recruitment of male volunteers. Two concepts permeate the ideas of this section, both of which were raised by participants as challenges to recruitment:

### ***Challenge #1: Overcoming the breadwinner syndrome***

*" There's that expectation in society that [men] put more energy into, or more time, anyway, into paid employment than... women, and so they may not have as much available time that's outside of paid employment. I don't know, maybe there's an expectation, maybe women are socialized to be helpers more than men."*

*- male volunteer*

Despite decades of consciousness-raising and talk of gender equality, men are often still perceived as breadwinners and are not expected to make room in their money-making schedules to volunteer. Indeed, 24% of participants specifically referred to the societal expectation that men devote their energy to earning money, or that anything short of such effort is either unacceptable or somehow not "living up to their potential." Paid employment in social work and related human service fields has long been dominated by women (with the exception of some higher level administrative positions), a phenomenon often attributed to the pay scale for such work.

Interestingly, even though participants often noted that this breadwinner expectation is changing, none addressed its relevance to single men or retirees. Although these men may still feel the pressures of financial responsibility, volunteer coordinators may be able to capitalize on a certain freedom from the breadwinner trap by targeting single men and

retirees for recruitment. Chapter 1 also suggests ways to work with the expectation to earn money for those men who seem unable to balance that responsibility with volunteering.

### ***Challenge #2: Tackling nature and nurture***

Likewise, men in our society are not generally seen as “nurturers.” Often in conjunction with comments about the expectation for men to earn money, 24% of participants noted that women are “better” at nurturing or are “naturally” more nurturing than men, or that men are not experienced nurturers. Men were also described as being “independent,” “aggressive,” and “strong.” Nurturing, however, may not be a quality that is required or even asked for in many volunteer positions in direct social services, and a characteristic such as independence does not necessarily preclude being a good volunteer. Furthermore, social conditioning may dictate that men either do not name their nurturing characteristics as such, or let them go unused or unexplored.

Regardless of the truth in assertions about male ability to nurture or obligation to earn money, the fact that these perceptions exist reveals lingering stereotypes that may deter men from volunteering. The fallout of such gender role socialization is that both public opinion and program development are infused with notions about what men like to do, what they are capable of, and what they know and do not know about social service and volunteerism.

The following two chapters distinguish between public relations and program development to highlight the specific issues pertinent to each. As you read, consider how the challenges refer back to social conditioning and whether each strategy maintains the status quo or offers new social prototypes.

## **Chapter 1: Working with public opinion**

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The effects of gender socialization and stereotypes on the recruitment of male volunteers are readily seen in the domain of public relations—how you present your program or volunteerism to the public, and how the public in turn perceives your program or volunteerism. Rather than addressing specific volunteer positions—that topic is covered later in Chapters 3 and 4—most of the ideas offered here focus on broad concepts associating men with volunteerism.

Socialization and stereotypes pervade the challenges in this section. However, several participants (23%) mentioned changes in societal expectations, often in the same breath in which they first described these stereotypes. Some men may be willing to forego the “rat race” of the corporate world for other kinds of rewards, for example.

The strategies below complement the changing tide of gender roles by creating a “climate of volunteerism” in which men feel both encouraged to volunteer and supported in their

efforts. While there may be no quick-fix way to reprogram how men and women have been socialized, these strategies may set the stage for easier recruitment of men in the future.

### **Challenge #3: Creating positive reinforcement for men who volunteer**

" I had one male provider one time, real excited to do child care. Called me back and said 'I've been ridiculed so much I won't do it.' "

- volunteer coordinator

Because volunteering sometimes lands outside the traditional realm of “men’s work,” men who volunteer may be subjected to social repercussions. Fortunately, negative reactions to male volunteerism do not seem to be widespread: most of the men interviewed for this research said that the reactions of those around them to their volunteer work had been nothing but positive (if the reactions had been otherwise, they might not have volunteered and been available for this study, a point which illustrates the implicitly skewed sample of men in supportive environments in this research).

However, enough participants (19% of volunteer coordinators and male volunteers) mentioned the possibility of negative consequences to warrant its acknowledgment as a challenge to recruitment. Among the comments about the social implications for male volunteers were the following ideas:

- ∇ Men sometimes need to defend what they are doing as volunteers, either because of the nature of the work or the lack of pay.
- ∇ Men may be stigmatized, told that something is wrong with them, or accused of pedophilia if they work in child care.
- ∇ Men may not feel that volunteering fits in with their reputation, or younger men may feel that it is not “cool.”
- ∇ Men performing traditionally “feminine” tasks might be assumed to be gay (an assumption which in and of itself may not be a negative consequence, but when coupled with homophobic tendencies could be enough to dissuade potential volunteers).

Interestingly, volunteerism may also mean a *lack* of positive social sanctions for men—several people suggested that some men like to be recognized for what they do and that volunteer opportunities do not always offer that recognition. While all of these perceptions may reflect stereotypes or be equally true of women, they suggest a need for conscientious efforts to break down negative connotations for men who volunteer.



**+** *Develop volunteer recognition efforts outside of your organization.* While recognition events within your agency reflect how highly you value your volunteers, in-house affairs limit the number of people who see the significance of what the

volunteers are doing. Many volunteers will not talk about their good works to their co-workers, churches, or even families, but may not object to your doing so.

With permission from your volunteers, *include people from other areas of the volunteer's life in your recognition efforts.* Consider adding employers or family members to your guest list if you have celebration parties, or writing letters of appreciation to employers, churches, alumni offices, social clubs, or professional associations. Note the good work that a given volunteer has done and, when appropriate, thank the employer (or other recipient) for supporting that volunteer's efforts.

This strategy not only enhances the recognition that volunteers receive, but may cause a ripple effect in which those institutions publicly acknowledge the deeds of their members. Showcasing the volunteerism of their constituents may enhance the image of that institution in the public eye and plant a seed in the consciousness of other members about the benefits of volunteerism. As one research participant noted, such recognition would work best as an "unwritten rule," rather than something that is offered in exchange for volunteer time.



***Counter ridicule of male volunteerism with positive publicity.*** Some people manage taunts quite handily, but others are far more reluctant to do so—a determination perhaps made by personality as much as anything else. Approaching the possibility of social backlash from a general standpoint may thus be more effective than defense on a case-by-case basis. Because repercussions of social service volunteering are caused by (mis)perceptions, they may be best handled through a public awareness campaign.

*Create billboards, advertisements, public service announcements, and posters depicting male volunteers in a positive light or thanking them for their time.* Especially when they do not include specific recruitment slogans (which could detract from the message of appreciation you are trying to deliver), such publicity could counter ill-conceived notions about the merit or connotations of volunteering, again contributing to a climate of volunteerism free from misguided negativity. This type of campaign is also well-suited for collaboration with other agencies, since there may be some expense involved. Moreover, simply being aware of what consequences might affect recruits will inform your efforts to appeal to men.

## Perpetration issues: A note for agencies serving vulnerable clients

" They're out there. And it's a small percentage, but it is probably the most devastating thing that kids can go through, and certainly...if it's falsified...that can be very devastating [for the male volunteer]. And when [men] hear of those kinds of things, they go 'oh, I don't want to do that to my family.'"

- volunteer coordinator

Because men are not expected to volunteer in social services, those who do run the risk of having their motives questioned. This possibility has particular import in programs for children, in which the reality of child molestation is a horror worthy of extra precautions, or in programs with other vulnerable clients. At the same time, however, recent history reveals cases of purported abuse that were determined to be unfounded and came at great emotional and social expense to the accused. Although false allegations represent only 2% of child sexual abuse cases,<sup>4</sup> they hurt volunteer recruitment efforts: seven percent of the participants in this research suggested that some men are reluctant to volunteer around children because they are concerned about false allegations of child abuse or being perceived as “predators.”

Managers of social service programs that work directly with vulnerable clients therefore face a special dilemma of creating safe environments for their clientele without deterring volunteers or producing a precarious legal situation for anyone involved. Initiating a background check is one means of safeguarding against criminal activity and levels the playing field for volunteers should allegations arise. Checks can, however, heighten fears of accusation by sending a message to recruits that they are “guilty until proven innocent.” Some interviewees felt comfortable working in child care. Nonetheless, for those who feared that self-knowledge alone was not enough to defend against allegations, the threat of false accusation was a deterrent. The attitude of parents or caretakers toward male volunteers can apparently intensify this dilemma.

Unfortunately, volunteer managers in children’s services will in all likelihood continue to lose potential volunteers as long as false accusation remains a viable possibility, and false accusation will undoubtedly endure as long as perpetration continues to be a reality. Nevertheless, because the challenge to recruiters of male volunteers seems not to stem from the threat of criminal activity itself—that risk always exists, with male or female volunteers—but rather the threat of *false* accusation, the task for program managers is to bridge the gap between the preventative measures in place and the fear that they protect only clients, not volunteers.



***Use background checks.*** Your agency as a whole should have procedures in place to reassure you that you have done what you can to protect clients, and background checks may be only part of your screening. In 1998, the Volunteers for Children Act was signed into law, granting organizations working with children, the elderly, or the disabled access to national fingerprint checks, which have been cited as the most effective way to identify perpetrators.<sup>5</sup> Utilize this safeguard and let parents and caretakers know exactly what procedures are in place and why you believe they are effective. While the safety of your clientele is your utmost priority, remind them about the damage that false allegation can do.

The Nonprofit Risk Management Center is a wonderful resource here; contact information is given in Appendix C.



***Explain your safeguards to recruits.*** Be sensitive to the defensiveness that potential volunteers may feel when they must comply with background checks. Make sure they know that the checks are conducted for their legal protection, and be honest with them about the probability of being accused (especially if your organization has a history of that nature). Trust your recruits and support them. Although the possibility of criminal behavior necessitates precautionary action on your part, some participants suggested that your attitude should still be “innocent until proven guilty.” If recruits do not want to participate because of possible allegations, create ways for them to volunteer without direct contact with clients.

#### ***Challenge #4: Equating “men” with “volunteers”***

If socialization deems volunteering a “woman’s thing,” then recruiters face the challenge of convincing men otherwise. Any assumptions that men do not volunteer in social services are reinforced when men do not see or have personal contact with other men who volunteer, or when their volunteerism is not supported outside the walls of your agency. This challenge may be particularly salient for organizations that as yet have no male volunteers or that have a heavily skewed ratio of female to male volunteers, although other programs may find it valid as well. From a programmatic perspective, not having male volunteers already puts you at a disadvantage in general efforts to recruit men. You face the “double whammy” of having no male volunteers to show potential recruits how men fit into your organization and of having a cyclical pool of female volunteers who in turn bring other women in their lives into your agency.



***If you have male volunteers, include them in any materials you publish about your organization.*** This tactic almost goes without saying, and is one that many volunteer coordinators indicated they are already using. Indeed, some noted that they were having trouble recruiting male volunteers despite the fact that men were portrayed in images of and articles about the program. This strategy seems to be one that should not be relied upon too heavily, but at the same time is worth adding if you are not doing it already, or continuing if you are. One caveat: Do not over-represent men in your publications, for doing so might mislead potential recruits about the actual percentage of men volunteering for your program. Moreover, do not recognize the accomplishments and contributions of male volunteers in quantities disproportionate to their numbers, which may be unfair to your female volunteers.



***Campaign with other organizations to recruit male volunteers.*** If you are in need of male volunteers in your program, there is a good chance that other social

service programs in your area are as well. Work with your partners in the field to create a publicity campaign directed at recruiting male volunteers. Sharing resources might allow you to reach a greater number of people than your efforts alone. Participants suggested that campaigns include messages reminding men that volunteering is one of the roles they should or could be playing or that part of being a man is to give back to your community or to help other people.



***Promote institutional environments that embrace volunteering.*** Hand-in-hand with volunteer recognition outside of your organization come acceptance and promotion of volunteerism that filter through institutions to potential volunteers. Such an atmosphere may be as subtle as requesting information about volunteer work on applications or performance evaluations, or as obvious as requirements, work leave allowances, and incentive programs for volunteerism. It may be worth your while to research which institutions (schools, businesses, public agencies, etc.) in your area have environments that are conducive to volunteering or to work with those that do not to create such support. Eleven percent of participants in this research implied that having an institutional backdrop of volunteerism might induce men to volunteer.

#### ***Challenge #5: Shaping public perceptions of your organization or clientele***

One difficulty volunteer coordinators face is that the general public may not know about the program at all, or that what they do know is incorrect. Both possibilities hinder recruitment. The first of these problems—lack of knowledge about what you do, is the fairly straightforward issue of publicity. The second is more complicated, because it entails education as well.

Popular opinion, for example, may dictate that your clientele is difficult to work with, or that your organization only accepts certain kinds of volunteers. One male volunteer related that his acquaintances often reacted with incredulity to his work with young teens: “...sometimes...that’s the first thing I’ll hear is, ‘you work with junior high kids?!’ and it’s like, well, yeah, but...they’re really not that bad.” Likewise, a volunteer who worked with physically disabled kids noted that many people made assumptions about a child’s mental capacity based on the presence of a wheelchair. Because so many social service agencies work with disempowered, stigmatized, or misunderstood populations, prejudices about what you do may cast a shadow over any recruitment undertakings, necessitating a clarification of those perceptions in order to enlist volunteers effectively.



***Place your program in the public eye.*** Some volunteer coordinators suggested that the publicity their organizations had received—through nationwide advertisements, local articles, or long-standing history—had helped them in their recruitment efforts. Although many participants in this research indicated that men do not pay attention to generalized volunteer information (see Chapter 4), others said that they had known or heard about an organization before actually volunteering there.

Increasing public familiarity with your program, then, is a logical strategy for increasing men's awareness about the nature of your organization. While entreaties for volunteers within that publicity may not be an effective way of recruiting men in and of itself, the added knowledge about your organization will undoubtedly serve you well in the long run. When thinking about awareness campaigns, keep in mind that a one-shot media blitz may not accomplish your mission; you may need ongoing publicity to make your mark on men's consciousness.



***Try to correct mistaken public opinion of what you do.*** The first step of this strategy, of course, is to determine how "the man on the street" perceives your program. Asking your current volunteers what surprised them about your program or what they have learned about your clients since volunteering may shed light on how other people in the community view your work. Clients themselves or direct service staff may also provide insight about what assumptions they have encountered.

Anticipating how your program or clientele could be misunderstood and discussing those misperceptions in recruitment presentations or publicity materials not only makes your job easier but also helps to educate the community as a whole about your organization and clientele. Encourage current volunteers to address those misperceptions as well, just as the man quoted above tried to correct his friends' ideas about working with junior high kids.

## ↳ Report from the field: Corporate volunteerism

**In recent years, the domains of profit and non-profit sectors have become increasingly integrated as corporations develop volunteer programs for employees and retirees. Businesses are finding that volunteer programs help achieve their strategic goals, boost employee skills and morale, and better their public standing.<sup>6</sup> Social service programs are likewise capitalizing on the availability of employees who have been given the opportunity to volunteer during work hours or have been referred from their corporation's volunteer manager.**

**This trend may be a particularly fruitful one for volunteer coordinators seeking to recruit more male volunteers, given the number of participants in this research who connected male volunteerism to work in one way or another. A recent article in *Industry Week* reported findings from a study by the Center for Corporate Community Relations at Boston College in which 181 community relations executives were surveyed. Among the findings are the following indications of the prevalence of corporate volunteer programs:**

- ▽ **79% said that their businesses have volunteer programs.**
- ▽ **51% "loan" executives to community causes.**
- ▽ **33% have policies granting paid time for volunteer service.<sup>7</sup>**

**For more information about corporate volunteer programs, contact:**

**The Points of Light Foundation**

**Suite 800**  
**Washington, DC 20005**  
**Telephone: (202) 729-8000**  
**Fax: (202) 729-8100**  
**E-mail: [volnet@pointsoflight.org](mailto:volnet@pointsoflight.org)**  
**Web site: <http://www.pointsoflight.org>**

## **Chapter 2:**

### **Making programmatic adjustments**

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Gender socialization and stereotypes have a much more subtle influence on social service programs than on public opinion. The challenges in this section reflect indirect consequences of social conditioning, such as experience, interest, and time availability. While the strategies in this section do fit in with the idea of creating a climate of male volunteerism, they are also more likely than those above to be internal, programmatic adjustments to accommodate men's needs now, rather than changes which lay the groundwork for men to adjust their opinions about volunteering over time.

#### ***Challenge #6: Welcoming men into your organization***

The interviews of this research revealed few stories of men who had consciously decided against volunteering. More common were reports of a prevailing hesitation about volunteering resulting from inexperience with the clientele, required skills, or emotional commitments involved, mentioned by 13% of participants. Many participants framed such trepidation in terms of a "comfort zone" that some men are unwilling to breach. Seventeen percent of participants alluded to discomfort with emotions and relationships but fears of trying something new, not succeeding, or inadvertently causing mental or physical pain to the clientele were also noted. One volunteer coordinator stated that men are less willing to try a task without a skill they perceive as needed (such as speaking Spanish in order to teach English to Mexican immigrants), regardless of whether that perception is grounded in reality.

Volunteer managers may be able to overcome this challenge by creating a comfortable and supportive environment for men in which they understand men's misgivings and offer them the opportunity to work through any doubts.



† ***Give men a chance to experience your organization without a commitment to long-term volunteering.*** Eighteen percent of participants suggested that men need to be able to try out volunteer activities without feeling obligated to volunteer for a longer period of time. The proposed means of doing so seemed to fall into two categories—programs that offer regular opportunities for "episodic" volunteering, and programs that have special events designed specifically for the purpose of experiencing long-term volunteering on a short-term scale.

Episodic volunteering may occur as often as the volunteer determines, demand only a finite amount of time, and require little forethought on the part of the volunteer. While many of the organizations in this study hold benefit concerts or other fundraising events, these may not necessarily offer the occasion for men to interact with clients or test the limits of their comfort zones. Indeed, coordinators may find it difficult to create such occasions when so many volunteer programs require screening and training.

Carefully structured situations, however, may provide a “*risk free*” way for male volunteers to test the waters of a certain kind of work without signing their time away and without sacrificing the safety of the clients or the quality of their interactions with volunteers. Some collegiate volunteer programs seem to have mastered the art of episodic volunteering because their pool of recruits by nature have obligations that can interfere with long-term volunteer commitments. Many non-profit agencies have taken that cue and specialize in episodic volunteer programs (see “Report from the field: City Cares of America”).

Its merit notwithstanding, episodic volunteering is an unrealistic or inappropriate choice for some organizations. Mentoring programs, for example, may necessitate a consistent interaction between client and volunteer. In these instances, *volunteer “job shadows” may be the key to overcoming men’s hesitations*. Relatively common in the world of paid labor and vocational decision-making, the opportunity for recruits to experience a day or an hour in the life of a volunteer is much more scarce—or at least less publicized. Volunteer job shadows may also bypass the problems of training and screening if the prospective volunteer is mostly observing the volunteer role and engaging in minimal one-on-one contact with the clients.

Both episodic volunteering and job shadows afford exposure to social service programs that could capture men’s interests or perhaps begin the process of redefining their comfort zones. In order for these strategies to be effective, though, volunteer coordinators must refrain from any kind of pressure to sign up for a longer commitment. If recruits feel as though they are being coerced into more of a commitment than they had intended, the strategy may backfire. Freedom to choose *not* to come back to your program is paramount. Well-timed information about how to get involved (perhaps included in follow-up “thank you” notes or newsletter mailings) may be the only action needed to remind men that they could choose to become a longer-term volunteer, but they should never feel as if the decision to do so is out of their control.

As the demands of time and competing interests keep many would-be volunteers' good intentions from becoming a reality, one coalition of non-profit organizations offers flexible volunteer opportunities that require little commitment but still entail hands-on work. City Cares of America is the umbrella organization that supports its affiliates' efforts to meet community needs through projects in local agencies and cultivates the formation of new Cares organizations. According to a profile statement issued by City Cares of America, twenty-four Cares programs exist in cities across the country, involving over 100,000 people in service each year.<sup>8</sup> They are easy to recognize with names such as "New York Cares" or

City Cares programs may be especially good partners for volunteer coordinators who want to recruit more men. The range of community agencies that work with Cares affiliates provides the opportunity to experience volunteering in many different service areas, or to "test the waters" of a particular type of work. For example, a person might occasionally deliver meals to homebound patients through a Cares organization, and later decide to volunteer as a long-term companion for a client on his delivery route.

Moreover, City Cares programs are specifically designed to fit volunteering into busy lives, so most projects occur outside of the nine to five work day. Also, leadership opportunities as volunteer project coordinators abound. These strengths all complement strategies for recruiting male volunteers.

For more information about City Cares, contact:

City Cares of America  
P.O. Box 7866  
Atlanta, Georgia 30357  
Telephone: (404) 875-7334  
Fax: (404) 253-1020  
E-mail: [citycares@mindspring.com](mailto:citycares@mindspring.com)



*Address concerns from the outset of recruitment.* While being aware of men's concerns about volunteering is important, that understanding may serve you even better if it is communicated to recruits. You may want to emphasize to them that inexperience with the clientele or not feeling comfortable with the situation does not preclude a positive volunteer experience or that you are willing to train volunteers. Such reassurance may help men to put aside their trepidation with the knowledge that they are neither alone nor unsupported in their discomforts.

Duly noting men's strengths in conjunction with recognizing their fears is another approach. One male volunteer for a mentoring program, for example, felt that he could not fail when his own work ethic complemented the agency's training and support. This man's capabilities as a worker and the readiness of the mentoring program to work with him on developing specific skills led to his becoming a recruitment success story.

*" I think when it's a group of guys, it's easier to jump in, because we're all in it together, and so I think, as a step, having all-male work groups, however it makes it a more comfortable environment...I think you would get people out that way."*

- male volunteer

 **Create all-male activities to initiate men's inclusion into your program.** Single-sex activities can be controversial and risk igniting cries of exclusion. Nevertheless, two participants in this study indicated that having an all-male group participate in a work day or special event might be one good way to launch the inclusion of male volunteers in your program without putting pressure on any one individual to be the first male volunteer. In addition, all-male events could lessen men's anxiety about volunteering, as indicated by the participant quoted above who led volunteer groups.

In planning such an event, be sure to consistently explain its purpose, thereby reducing anxiety about the exclusion of women. Moreover, if you are concerned with resistance to having a single-sex activity, network with your colleagues to see what reactions there have been in the community to such events in the past, if there are comparable activities for women only, and how you might respond to any criticism.

 **Create a forum for volunteer feedback.** One theme noted among research participants is the need for volunteers to feel that their work is important both in the services they provide and the ideas they can contribute. Volunteers who have ideas about potential improvements within programs or ways to augment services should have a forum in which to express them. One male volunteer, for example, had an idea about expanding a mentoring program, but did not want to take on the coordination piece necessary for such a development himself. Another reported that a "come when you can" attitude at a previous volunteer post made him feel as if his presence was unnecessary. Providing a means for volunteers to express feedback might help men know that their perspective is important, increase the likelihood that they will stay on board or recruit others, and improve your program with their ideas.

*" I'll have to say that on a very practical level, we really like having male volunteers when it comes- this is going to sound very stereotypical- but when it comes to doing our donations and lifting with the furniture and so on, I have to say that's an asset."*

- volunteer coordinator

 **Do not underestimate male sensitivity to stereotypes.** Many of the men in this study were well aware that they were anomalies in their field, if not because they had observed that fact, then because it had been relentlessly pointed out to them. Whether you have men volunteering for your program already or are hoping to in the future, make time to honestly examine the stereotypes you or your co-workers have about men and how those assumptions might be perceived by volunteers.

Some men likened their situation to women entering male-dominated realms, expressing the need to be challenged and taken seriously. One volunteer resented the assumption by program staff that the men would take on more physical labor in

addition to their assigned tasks. A veteran of social service volunteerism noted that some agencies are “better prepared” to work with male volunteers than others. While some men might perpetuate or “prove true” stereotypes, others might find them confining or judgmental.

### ‘Women’s issues:’ A note for self-identified feminist agencies

The issues surrounding male inclusion in feminist agencies—let alone feminism—run deeper than the scope of this booklet and have undoubtedly been hashed and rehashed in organizations that describe themselves as such. It is important to note, however, the extent to which participants addressed feminism within the context of an organizational climate supportive of male volunteerism. If you are a volunteer coordinator within a feminist agency, consider these points raised by research participants:

- ⇒ Do women’s services and involvement need to be well solidified before an agency considers male involvement and men’s programs?
- ⇒ Might male involvement help feminist agencies accomplish their missions? Are feminists “willing to use men to get to men”?
- ⇒ Are staff in some feminist agencies resistant to the inclusion of male volunteers on either a philosophical or personal level?
- ⇒ Are feminist agencies “women’s turf”?

The safety and sorority of female clients or staff are not necessarily jeopardized with the inclusion of male volunteers, but the dynamics of an organization would certainly change. One volunteer coordinator at a feminist agency said that staff appreciated the space to talk freely about feminism, which they may not do with men present. Likewise, male involvement may draw attention to what has traditionally been a “women’s issue,” but, at the same time, any given male volunteer might not want to carry that extra weight simply because he is a man. One male volunteer thought that because of his “clout” as a man, he had been asked to speak about sexual assault with a frequency disproportionate to his experience.

Ultimately, feminist agencies wishing to include men among their volunteer ranks must find the balance between their mission, their clientele, and the needs and experiences of both staff and volunteers. If nothing else, the issues above may serve as conversation points from which a discussion in your organization or community can begin.

### ***Challenge #7: Building men’s interest in your program activities***

Seventeen percent of the participants in this study raised the possibility that some social service programs simply do not interest men or that administrative participation—

working on boards and committees, for example—is more appealing than direct service. Admitting that your program is not interesting to the men you are recruiting may be a difficult concession. When male involvement is critical to optimizing service to your clients, however, one option you have is to make programmatic changes to interest men.

Note:

This strategy involves making assumptions about what men like to do, which verges on utilizing and condoning stereotypes and is precisely what some people want to avoid (and directly contradicts a few of the other strategies offered in this booklet). Nevertheless, enough participants (28%) referred to this strategy—even in its toying with stereotypes—to justify its inclusion here.

Moreover, reworking your program to offer a different choice of activities does not necessarily imply focusing only on what is traditionally “macho.” Both men and women appreciate fun, challenging, and interesting work. There will always be people who find their niche in stuffing envelopes, but volunteer positions that are carefully constructed to attract certain characteristics will likely be more successful in doing so than those requiring someone to “help out” where needed.

*" I think- this is pure speculation- but women might be more in a role where they see volunteering as maybe the right thing to do and they want to do it, and it's not quite so important whether it really, whether it's fun and enjoyable, and that would be a bigger consideration from a man's perspective."*

*- male volunteer*



***Make programmatic changes to appeal to men.*** Several participants suggested that program managers evaluate whether or not the activities they offer attract men. Some interviewees proposed that traditionally “masculine” activities, such as sporting events, outdoor work, and “rugged volunteer opportunities,” could be incorporated into direct service so that it is more of a “male thing.”

In a similar vein, one participant theorized that having a cycle of activities for volunteers to rotate through might help keep men interested. Others noted that volunteering gave them an opportunity to do “fun stuff” that they might not otherwise make time to do, such as going to the movies as a friend or mentor to someone in need. The gist of this strategy is to *think about what men might enjoy in their day-to-day lives, and try to integrate those activities into volunteer work.*

### **Challenge #8: Helping men find time for volunteering**

*" ...there are some people, some men that I know, that feel that they're too busy to take on anything else, because they've got all these other things that are*

more important to them, given whatever their value scheme is. You're not going to convince those folks to find time to do it...there's a certain attitude you'll run into where, 'No, I'm too busy to even think about doing that sort of thing.' And I tend to believe that that's more expressed by men than by women."

- male volunteer

Lack of available time may be the easiest justification for not volunteering. In fact, of the 24 participants who talked about time as a factor in recruitment, 63% implied that time might be more problematic for men than women. Another 30% said that men and women are both so busy that finding time to volunteer is difficult.

Apparently, the societal pressure on men to earn money may be manifested in the amount of time men spend on the job. Several participants suggested that because some men work so much, their free time is particularly valuable, and they may want to spend it with family, friends, or a significant other rather than volunteering. A few interviewees hypothesized that men are less able to balance work with other parts of their lives, or that women are more accustomed to doing so because they anticipate having to juggle work with family and any other interests or activities. A truly logistical time barrier is the matter of business hours—many social service programs need volunteers during the day, when so many people are at work. The strategies for overcoming lack of time address how to fit volunteering into other aspects of men's busy lives, rather than asking them simply to make room in their schedules to volunteer.



**+ Engage volunteers' friends and family in your work.** If men want to volunteer without sacrificing quality time with those they care about, one way to let them do that is by involving those other people in the volunteer work. Volunteer programs that work with entire families encourage the participation of not just one individual, but those around him as well. Moreover, some male volunteers in this study reported resentment from people in their lives about the amount of time they spent volunteering, although the number experiencing that sentiment was small. Though you have little influence over volunteers' friends and families, you may be able to ease their resentment and eliminate the negative feedback men receive if they feel included in the work of your program. Encouraging their participation may also save men from choosing between devoting time to volunteering or to their friends and families.

In 1997, 8.8 million Americans worked at least half of their hours between 4 PM and midnight on a regular basis.<sup>9</sup>



**Work with and around business hours.** One means of avoiding scheduling glitches is to create evening or weekend activities that do not conflict with business hours. If your program must operate during typical work hours, however, you still have a number of options for attracting male volunteers. Perhaps the most apparent of

these is to recruit from the pool of men who are not working from nine to five—namely retirees, swing shift workers, and the unemployed.

Early retirees, in particular, are a group of potential recruits mentioned by 7% of participants in interviews. These men may be full of energy and experience, and have time to spare for volunteering (see “Report from the field: Senior volunteers” for more information). Another option is to target men in businesses that grant time off during work hours for volunteerism or to work with corporations to develop volunteer programs for their employees. One participant suggested that when time is an issue, a business could pledge a specified number of volunteer hours per month and spread that time commitment among many employees.

If you opt for one of the latter alternatives, remember that there still might be individual men whose schedules truly do not match your program needs, but who want to volunteer. Creatively accommodating them (with an option such as “virtual volunteering” through use of the Internet) or referring them to a similar program may work best for those cases. Once you have established a way for volunteerism to complement business schedules, you can use that accomplishment as a selling point of your program.

### ↳ Report from the field: Senior volunteers

**Retired workers and senior citizens have long been involved in service activities. As the Baby Boomer generation retires, this resource will likely become increasingly available and depended upon by the world of social service volunteerism. In fact, the data about senior volunteers is already impressive:**

- **According to the Administration on Aging, 15 million senior citizens volunteer.<sup>10</sup>**
- **The Independent Sector reports that the monetary equivalent to senior volunteer time is 77.2 billion dollars.<sup>11</sup>**
- **A survey by the American Association of Retired Persons concludes that 60% of seniors who do not currently volunteer would at least consider doing so if recruited.<sup>12</sup>**

**Retirees may be a good pool for volunteer coordinators who want to recruit more men. Although they may be cherishing their long-awaited time to themselves, retirees may also want to stay active and share their life experiences with others. Indeed, the range of backgrounds and personal histories among retirees in many ways makes them ideal candidates for volunteer work. Retirees may have cultivated skills and abilities over their lifetime that could prove helpful to others. While being recruited simply because they have time may not captivate retired men, appealing to how they can use those skills might.**

**For more information about senior volunteers, contact:**

**Administration on Aging  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
330 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20201  
Telephone: (202) 619-0724**

E-mail: [aoainfo@aoa.gov](mailto:aoainfo@aoa.gov)  
Web site: <http://www.aoa.dhhs.gov/default.htm>

## Part II: Marketing strategies

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" ...maybe not being reached out to as much...maybe not being aware that...they can make a difference in a way that they hadn't thought of before. You know, they don't have to pound the nails...I think they need to know that there's interesting forms of work out there and that people really need their help and that they have something really special to offer..."  
- volunteer coordinator, suggesting possible barriers to recruiting men

While gender socialization and stereotypes do seem to affect male volunteerism in social services, social conditioning alone does not tell the whole story. Another possibility is that men are unaware of what volunteer opportunities are available to them or uninformed about how to go about volunteering and the nature of the work. If this is true, then it is not volunteerism *per se* that *deters* men, but rather marketing that has not *attracted* them.

The next two chapters address how to market volunteer opportunities so that men pay attention to your message, understand it, and act on it. Nearly all participants (97%) addressed ways in which marketing affects the likelihood that men will volunteer in social services. Although the strategies presented in this section sometimes relate to socialization and stereotypes, they are also more direct actions specific to your organization and often will not take the time to implement that attitudinal changes would. Again, two concepts set the scene for thinking about marketing challenges and strategies:

### **Challenge #9: Naming the need for male volunteers**

Soliciting volunteers is common; specifying male volunteers is not. The interviews of this research revealed that a shortage of male volunteers in social service agencies is not necessarily obvious to the general public. If men do not know that their help is sought, they cannot be expected to join your ranks. Articulating that need is therefore the first step to meeting it. Ten percent of participants in this research proposed that alerting men that there is a scarcity of male volunteers will at the very least raise their awareness of your needs. Interviewees also suggested that communicating the need for male volunteers might appeal to some men's desire to "fix things."

### **Challenge #10: Inserting your program into men's consciousness**

Sixteen percent of the volunteer coordinators and male volunteers who participated in this study indicated that one problem in the recruitment of male volunteers is that men are not focused on finding volunteer work and therefore do not realize the variety of opportunities available to them. Others suggested, in a similar vein, that men simply do

not think about volunteering, do not pay as close attention to notices for volunteer positions, or are not “tuned in” to stories about volunteerism. A few participants even noted that traditional methods of recruitment are ineffective. One person, for example, commented that people turn themselves off to flyers; another thought that superstars in advertising seem unrealistic. Three said that newspapers reach a limited audience and may only be effective if one is seeking specific volunteer work. Ultimately, you want men to realize that *you are speaking to them and that your need for volunteers applies to them.*

The strategies of the following chapters will help you make your need for male volunteers known and provoke men’s thinking about your program by addressing both the logistics of your recruitment and the content of your marketing materials. Unlike social expectations, these issues are more a matter of information than attitude and may therefore be easier to change.

### **Chapter 3: Changing *how* you recruit**

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While the public relations strategies discussed above address the appearance of your program or volunteerism to the general public, this section focuses on how your program and volunteerism are presented to potential recruits in particular. Marketing questions such as “who,” “where,” and “how” emerged in interviews and appear in the challenges below, and their corresponding answers in the strategies. These strategies are also geared toward giving you the captive audience you need in order to communicate the content-oriented ideas of the next chapter.

#### ***Challenge #11: Asking men to volunteer for your program***

According to a 1995 Gallup Organization survey, people often say that they volunteer simply because they were asked to help.<sup>13</sup> If men as a gender are not asked to volunteer by the society they live in, the above findings point to an obvious means of recruiting male volunteers: ask them. Certainly, as a recruiter, *you* could be the person doing the asking. In fact, 18% of participants suggested that volunteer coordinators must be more “aggressive” or deliberate in their entreaties to men if they wish to have a favorable response to their requests. On the other hand, participants offered several strategies for recruiting male volunteers that do not directly involve volunteer coordinators.

Note:

While two people implied that calling for male volunteers may cause you to lose female volunteers, three said that women seeking volunteer work are not likely to be deterred by requests for men. This point is worth considering, however, if you are in as much need of female volunteers as male.



† **Utilize personal invitation.** A well-directed personal invitation from a volunteer to a potential recruit is a great way to generate interest in your program. In addition to encouraging your volunteers to invite others to participate, special events or promotions may be just the excuse they need to ask their brother, father, co-worker, husband, significant other, or friend to volunteer. One participant, a mentoring program coordinator, advocated for direct invitation and had used that tactic to such an extent that it had almost become a science:

*...we find that it takes at least 20 people to be invited multiple times to get 10 people to come to an information event. Of the 10 people who come to an information event, five to seven will volunteer, and one to two will become [mentors]. Four to five will say they're interested in becoming [mentors], but one to two actually will. So from 20 down to one to two. And that's 20 that were invited in person [or] on the telephone and multiple times. So what we tell people is that if you're interested in having your friend come, be prepared to invite them over and over again, be prepared to take them to the information event, come yourself, call back and check in the day before and warm it back up again, even the day of, make sure that they know how to get there, call them up if they didn't come and invite them to the next one. So it's not casual. There's nothing about word-of-mouth that we've found that works on a casual basis. It has to be very intentional.*

In this particular agency, personal invitation also seemed to enhance the sense of community among volunteers of the program.



**Encourage word-of-mouth volunteerism.** Both volunteer coordinators and male volunteers alike agree that word-of-mouth is one of the best forms of recruitment. News about your program and what you are doing may spread of its own accord, but do not assume that it will. As suggested in the above quotation, word-of-mouth works best when it is deliberate, rather than casual. Urge your volunteers to talk about what they are doing and why, whom they are helping, and how others can participate. While personal invitation may bring specific people into your volunteer pool, word-of-mouth may spread general knowledge about your program and volunteer opportunities.



**Recruit male volunteers with male volunteers.** If you recruit through speaking engagements or activity fairs and already have men volunteering for your program, you may be a few steps ahead of the game. While one participant suggested that men might respond better to a woman's request for help, most who addressed this point suggested that men may listen better to other men or be better able to imagine themselves doing that kind of work if a man were describing it. Male volunteer coordinators might invoke that advantage to a certain extent, but are still being paid,

whereas volunteers can truly speak to the nature of their volunteer work. Having male volunteers accompany you to recruiting activities may spark additional interest and capture a few more men.



***Utilize contacts connected to a specific group.*** Certainly if you go through the trouble of creating a marketing plan to attract men, you want to have a forum in which to present the fruits of your labor. Among the 32% of participants who talked about recruiting through networks of various groups or institutions, several participants maintained the importance of identifying male leaders within those circles who can act as spokesmen on your behalf.

*This strategy speaks to specific arenas in which volunteer coordinators can find an “in,” so that their message is not dismissed as coming from an outsider.* Contacts within unions, churches, clubs, schools, alumni and professional associations, fraternities, lodges, and neighborhood councils are all examples of people who may be willing to deliver your recruitment message for you or at least introduce you, thereby legitimizing your connection to their group. Working with corporate retirement planning workshops is another suggestion. You may also be able to partner with such a group to do a volunteer project together and introduce members to your work.

Note:

In asking male volunteers to help with recruitment, it is important not to place an undue burden on the men you have (or incite their untimely burnout) by singling them out for an additional time commitment. Explaining why you would like their help in particular, may foster a conversation in which you can feel out their willingness to assist you, or even generate new ideas about recruitment of male volunteers. Inactive volunteers who can no longer commit to regular volunteer work but would like to stay involved with your organization may be another source of recruiters.

***Challenge #12: Breaking the habit of not volunteering***

*You can't teach an old dog new tricks.*

Countless clichés describe the uphill battle of initiating a new activity, and volunteerism apparently does not escape that inertia. Seven percent of participants said that they thought many men do not volunteer out of habit or because they have not yet hurdled that first step of making a phone call or expressing interest in volunteering. For men on the cusp of volunteering, a little effort on your part may be all that is needed to start counting

them among your ranks of volunteers. Easy access to volunteering and friendly competition are ways of transforming inertia into volunteer work.



***Recruit at places men frequent.*** If you wait for men to come to you, you may be waiting a long time. Several participants mentioned going to specific locations that might be fruitful for recruiters, including places of business (especially in male-dominated professions, such as engineering), gyms, meetings of social, fraternal, or service organizations (such as the Elks, Moose, Eagles, Rotary and Kiwanis), college dormitories and fraternities, sports teams, and branches of the military or reserves. Your efforts may be especially well-received by organizations that already have volunteer programs in place, as many collegiate and military institutions do.



***Make the first steps to volunteering as easy as possible.*** You may not have much luck securing volunteers if your schedule is constantly booked, recruits must drive across town to meet with you, asking a question entails endless games of telephone tag, or you are otherwise inaccessible. In trying to capture men on the brink of volunteering, your goal is to give them as few excuses as possible for not taking the plunge. One volunteer coordinator, for instance, reported that potential volunteers sometimes drop by her office when she is unable to see them, but do not come back for appointments. She is therefore trying to be flexible with drop-ins and more open to spontaneity. One recurring suggestion from participants is that recruiters go to workplaces to give talks and meet with potential volunteers on breaks, at lunch, or immediately after work. Doing so averts the possibility that a recruit's resolution to pick up the phone and call or swing by your agency after work is lost amid the shuffle of the workday or daunting rush-hour traffic.

You may also find success in using the growing expanse of the Internet not only to promote your program but to arrange interviews or answer questions about volunteering as well. Although many non-profits lack the technology or training money to work with the Internet, those with that resource have nothing to lose by capitalizing on its convenience and may in fact be at a disadvantage if information about volunteering is not accessible electronically. If you are overwhelmed with work yourself, do not lose consideration for your recruits: let them know when you will get back to them with the answers to their questions.



***Use friendly competition.*** If men have given any thought to volunteering before, a little nudge from you in the form of friendly competition might incite them to finally enlist in your program. One male volunteer, for example, told of the success of competition between two local branches of a union in a fundraising campaign. Competition to contribute time may be a harder sell than writing a check, but could still be effective. Again, charismatic contacts within groups and targeting male-dominated circles might boost your success with this strategy.

## Chapter 4: Creating recruitment messages for men

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Once you have a captive audience willing to listen to you, one of your volunteers, or your contact within another group, you need to have a message that will keep men's interest and convince them to volunteer. This section speaks to some of the challenges of holding men's attention when they do not necessarily equate their lives with volunteering. The assumption of these strategies is that men might be interested in your program as is, but they have not yet seen it in a way that has convinced them to volunteer. While some participants advanced specific messages to sell your program, others merely alluded to the need for marketing to men or warned against using the same recruitment pitch for all potential volunteers. Regardless, the strategies below may help you encourage men to hear what you have to say.

### ***Challenge # 13: Articulating how men can contribute***

Even if men know that there is a shortage of male volunteers, they may not know what they, in particular, have to offer a social service program. Perhaps they have preconceived notions of what kind of person a volunteer manager is looking for and therefore dismiss their own potential, or they may not realize that they are already involved with similar activities or have skills that are applicable in a social service situation. Recruiters may see greater success in their endeavors if they pair their bids for male volunteers with specific ways that men can help.



***Help men see what they have to offer.*** If you do not know what men can contribute to your volunteer program, then you probably should not be recruiting male volunteers. Name the tasks and experiences that you feel men could offer your program, and communicate those thoughts to recruits. If you seek the general influence of a male role model or "male perspective," rather than a particular skill, let recruits know that their experiences as men are enough to qualify them for the positions you have open. Be aware, however, that recruits may still need or appreciate training specific to your program or interaction with your clientele. If you come across men who are interested in volunteering but are really not appropriate for your program, refer them to specific people and programs that better suit their background or interests. You may find the favor returned in time.

" ATHLETES WANTED ."



***Recruit by traits that characterize certain groups of men.*** Another way to help men see themselves in your request for volunteers is by highlighting specific characteristics with which men identify. Recruiters from one program in this research, for instance, seek only volunteers who have been varsity athletes in college and use the "Athletes Wanted" slogan in their advertisements. Another program

works only with attorneys. Both had among the highest percentages of male volunteers in the study.

*Focusing your recruitment efforts on elements of personal history or demographics that appeal to men's sense of self can connect that self-perception to volunteerism. A recruitment message directed to early retirees, practitioners of one profession, or enthusiasts of a certain hobby may induce a potential volunteer to think twice about what they have just seen or heard, and it may also pique their curiosity about why those characteristics are sought. Ideally, you have a response to that curiosity!*

If only a limited number of people possess the trait you are looking for (perhaps some sort of skill or certification), the fact that only a few people “have what it takes” to fulfill the volunteer role may likewise entice men. An additional advantage of recruiting by traits is the positive association with “doing good” that volunteering yields (in contrast to possible social repercussions). According to the volunteer coordinator of the legal program above, some lawyers do *pro bono* work in part because it reflects well on the profession as a whole. There is great room for creativity when using this strategy, as long as the trait you seek is not so obscure that you are unable to find constituents, or so elite as to be unreasonably exclusive.

#### ***Challenge # 14: Revealing the rewards of volunteering***

Even a man informed about opportunities may resist volunteering because of what he thinks he must relinquish in order to volunteer at a social service agency. This reluctance may, in effect, be the manifestation of the social conditioning and stereotypes covered earlier. A man groomed to be a breadwinner, for example, may be unwilling to do work for free. One participant noted that even full-time volunteer programs with stipends do not offer enough money to support a family. A volunteer coordinator suggested that some men might be reluctant to be supervised or surrounded by women, given the small percentage of male staff members in many social service organizations.

If entrenched biases are the source of men's aversion to volunteering, there may be little you can do to persuade them otherwise, except to join the ranks of activists and educators calling for such men to rethink their beliefs. On the other hand, if those same men have not considered their perceived sacrifices in relation to the rewards that volunteering generates, the outlook for recruitment is much more optimistic.

Indeed, some men may be well aware of the need for volunteers or how to get involved, but still feel that their time and energy are not well spent volunteering. One explanation for such an attitude is that those men do not know about the benefits of volunteering for the volunteer, or do not believe that the rewards they hear about are meaningful and important. A male volunteer interviewed for this study said that if recruiters are interested in enlisting men in their programs, they need to ask “how big is the bait for them?” A volunteer coordinator had a similar comment: this pitfall may stem from “how we teach about volunteerism as a society”—as a relationship of “helper and helped”

rather than a “reciprocal relationship” in which the lines between server and served are blurred.

If some men do, in fact, assume a one-way helping relationship in volunteerism, or if the rewards offered are not appealing to them, then the task for volunteer managers is to *present the benefits in a way that shows a different and more alluring perspective to those men*. They may then realize—as some male volunteers in this study had—that the rewards of volunteering can not only outweigh the time spent and energy exerted, but also justify working without pay or the other above-named “sacrifices.”

### Ethnocentrism: A note about this research and multi-cultural populations

In reading through this section and others, it is important for practitioners to remember that the majority of participants in this research identified themselves as having a “white” or “European” background (see Appendix B for more information about participant demographics). Although many ideas in this booklet apply to any population of men (such as working with group contacts or utilizing personal invitation), others may reflect experiences specific to the cultures represented in this research. The breadwinner concept, for example, or the perceived sacrifices of volunteering discussed above may not be relevant to all cultures.

In many cases, volunteer coordinators simply need to be aware that these recruitment strategies may stem from the cultural backgrounds of participants—or that their current practices may reflect their own cultural biases—and act accordingly. In other cases, readers may find that slight variations in the implementation of strategies might affect different populations of men. If you are trying to create a program with men’s interests in mind, for example, the type of program you create may also be tailored to activities or interests predominant in certain cultures, just as they could be geared toward a certain age group. Likewise, volunteer recognition may be more effective with an eye to cultural variations in displays of appreciation. I urge readers to consider the variations among racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds with regard to their influence in gender roles and identities, and, therefore, volunteer recruitment.



**Highlight the rewards relevant to men’s values.** Thirteen percent of participants said that an emphasis on practical benefits of volunteering may catch the attention of some men who might not otherwise have considered giving away their time. Some suggested focusing on the usefulness of the volunteer position in building a résumé or work skills (which perhaps applies more to younger volunteers than older volunteers), and others proposed having incentives for volunteering, such as paying jobs available after a certain length of service.

The range of rewards experienced by the participants in this research, however, indicates the vast array of possible enticements for men. One means of knowing which benefits to highlight might be to talk to any men already volunteering for your organization about what they have gained, or to tailor the emphasis to whatever group of men you are seeking. The program above targeting athletes, for example, enables participants to work in a team-oriented setting where discipline and commitment are required, just as they would be on a sports team. Likewise, if you target men interested in exploring new careers, your best bet may be to accentuate the ways that your volunteer position can help them do that.

### Note:

Some empirical data actually contradict this strategy. A 1995 study reported in the *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* tested the effectiveness of volunteer recruitment messages that focused on the benefits or costs of volunteering. The researchers worked from the assumption that if something involves sacrifice, it is more highly valued than something that does not. The results seemed to indicate that the costs of volunteering should be represented realistically to recruits, and the authors suggested that overemphasizing rewards might connote bribery. None of the interviewees in my research, however, conveyed the same belief, although several did imply that recruitment messages emphasizing challenge would be attractive to men. Interestingly, 69% of the participants in the 1995 study were female, which leaves unanswered the question of how costs and benefits might best be balanced in recruitment messages targeting men. Until such a study is conducted, the important point to remember may be to avoid overselling the rewards to the extent that they appear discreditable.<sup>14</sup>

### **Challenge #15: Connecting your program to men's lives**

*" If I'm working for [a bank], and I'm wearing a three-piece suit, and you're asking me to leave my work in the middle of the day, go over to [a low-income neighborhood], and sit down with a kindergartner who's maybe got head lice, he's definitely got a runny nose, and..you're asking me to- how do I even- why are you even here? What do I have to do with that kid?"*

*- volunteer coordinator, demonstrating the disconnection between potential volunteers and the populations they might serve*

One reason that men may not volunteer for your program is that the connection between their lives and your clientele is not obvious to them. Participants proposed a number of reasons for this disconnection, ranging from societal indifference and an impersonal, money-driven social structure to a far more personal self-absorption that impedes thinking about other people. Some suggested that this phenomenon applies to today's communities in general, while others indicated that it is a barrier particular to men.

On the other hand, participants also suggested that detachment in communities is not immutable and that interest in volunteering can indeed develop out of clear and personal connections drawn between social service work and its impact on entire populations, not just those in need.

 **+** *Connect volunteer work to financial and social impacts.* Many social service administrators are becoming more familiar with the practice of assessing their programs and assigning quantitative values to the effectiveness and importance of their work as a consequence of outcome-oriented funding. The same logic—and many of the same valuations—can be applied to volunteer work and communicated to recruits. Sixteen percent of participants indicated that data could be used in your presentations and publications, detailing how time spent with your client population saves resources, prevents an unfortunate situation, or yields financial rewards. If you have such data already, connect volunteering and its economic or social impacts as concretely as possible and indicate what might happen if the positions for which you are recruiting remain empty.

As with funding requests, recruitment materials should be able to answer the question, “so what?” to the point that the intended audience has no doubt about why volunteering for your program is important or about what it accomplishes. This strategy, too, lends itself to a problem-solver mentality, offering men specific ways to “fix” social problems. If you do not have readily available data that you can use to appeal to men’s sensibilities, consider taking the time to conduct research within your organization, to network with similar programs to see what assessments they have, or to investigate the wealth of information in libraries that evaluates social services—such effort may be well worth your time and reinvigorate your passion about why you are recruiting volunteers in the first place.

*" I don't know if it's men or just me, but I like the action aspect of it, like I've done something...I think as part of the full benefit of what you're doing, you need also to have that interaction, but some volunteerism is just purely about action anyway, just getting something done... Men love to get things done, say 'I did that. I made that.'"*  
- male volunteer

 **Emphasize what will be accomplished.** Another means of marketing your program to men is to promote what volunteers accomplish. In many respects, this strategy is similar to the approach described above. Whereas that strategy links social service to the community at large and the lives of volunteers, this strategy narrows the scope of impact to precisely what any given volunteer will contribute to the clients.

Undertaking this strategy may mean shifting the focus of your volunteer descriptions from relationship-oriented to action-oriented client services. Indeed, some participants implied that volunteer descriptions that were too “warm and fuzzy”

would not appeal to men as much as those that emphasized action. Presumably, more concrete illustrations or statistics about what, exactly, volunteers get done would round out this approach. Noting the number of people a volunteer feeds by working at a soup kitchen, for example, assigns a measurable impact to the volunteer's time.

Note:

Several participants (11%) were not convinced that an action-oriented marketing approach would appeal to men. Some believed that men are less active than women in general and that highlighting action would be irrelevant. Others thought that action-oriented recruiting would be equally appealing to women or that some men would just as readily volunteer for relationship-based positions, suggesting that personality is more the issue than gender. One interviewee cautioned against misrepresenting a relationship-based program with action-oriented words out of a desire to attract men. The best implementation of this strategy, then, may be to communicate information about your program in as many different ways as possible to cover the possible nuances of gender or personality that might be attracted to one kind of description more than another.



***Focus on challenge, opportunity, and skills.*** Nine percent of interviewees reasoned that if recruitment messages portrayed volunteer positions in much the same way as paying jobs, men might be more interested. The first step in such a portrayal is having a position description that is clear and straightforward about the expectations of the work and that explains that the volunteer has responsibilities complementary to those of the program staff. The next step is wording that description in a way that catches men's attention. The phrases participants generated were centered around the concepts of challenge, opportunity, and skill development. One male volunteer, for instance, suggested "we need you to run this, we need you to be in charge of this, we need someone to bring our program up to par," so that recruits have the idea that volunteering is analogous to fixing "a broken machine." Another said that even though his volunteer work with a young boy was sometimes uncomfortable, he continued because it was a challenge.

Other participants suggested focusing on the positive aspects of the program, with phrases along the lines of "this is where we need male leadership." Again, the opportunities to build a résumé, improve job skills, interact with different people, and explore new territory are also worth highlighting. Both written descriptions and visual images can depict the life experiences of volunteers and how their talents are utilized in social service. The main drawbacks to this approach are that men who are looking to balance their work lives with their leisure time may find a volunteer position that sounds like a job unappealing because it "smacks too much of work," or may feel intimidated by a rigorous volunteer description and application process.

## 1 Report from the field: Service learning

One trend that will undoubtedly have a long-term impact on volunteerism is the increasingly integral role of service learning in schools across the country. In all levels of education, teachers are using service to enhance their curricula and connect classroom material with life experience. The following data reported by Campus Compact, a coalition of college and university presidents dedicated to promoting and supporting student community service, gives some indication of the prevalence of service learning in institutes of higher education. In the 23% of higher learning institutes in the United States that are Campus Compact affiliates,

- undergraduate students give 29 million hours of community service.
- service learning involves 10,800 faculty members.
- 11,800 courses have service learning components.<sup>15</sup>

Service learning has the potential to tremendously impact recruitment of male volunteers. It counters gender socialization and stereotypes by encouraging whole populations of young men to include volunteering in their self-concepts and to participate in volunteer activities alongside their male peers. Introducing boys to volunteerism in school also raises the likelihood that they will understand the variety of activities available to them and perhaps even seek out such work on their own.

**For more information about service learning, contact:**

**Campus Compact  
Box 1975  
Brown University  
Providence, Rhode Island 02912  
Telephone: (401) 863-1119  
Fax: (401) 863-3779  
E-mail: [campus@compact.org](mailto:campus@compact.org)  
Web site: <http://www.campus.org>**

## **Conclusions: What to do next**

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Ultimately, each of the strategies offered in these pages hinges upon the efforts of volunteer coordinators to make them work. This research yielded no means of recruiting men that do not involve volunteer managers in some way, although many of the strategies may only take an initial flurry of leadership or action in order to get the ball rolling, and several strategies involve collaboration among social service agencies or with other community partners. Nevertheless, you may be reeling from the breadth of strategies conveyed here, thinking, “What do I do now?” Moreover, the same time crunch that prevents some men from knocking on social service agency doors is a likely reality for many volunteer coordinators as well, and even though expensive advertising campaigns

were not highly endorsed by research participants, simply revising pamphlets and preparing new presentations may be prohibitively expensive.

If you have found the ideas of this booklet to be at all helpful, thought provoking, or worthwhile, then your last task is to prevent any newfound resolution to include male volunteers from becoming a “to-do” list item that never gets done. The time you have spent reading this booklet will be wasted if it is stashed along with your margin notes among the papers of crowded desktops, and the tactics you have thought about applying are lost in budget negotiations. This outcome is all the more probable if your program is running well as is or if you already have enough female volunteers to keep it going. You may be wondering if adding men to your volunteer pool is even worth the effort. Participants of this research seemed to think so; when asked if volunteer coordinators should recruit more men, 76% of male volunteers answered in the affirmative. Another 10% qualified their responses (“it depends,” for example), but generally agreed.

If you have thought about what male volunteers mean to your agency and have some sense of determination to increase their numbers, then it is precisely that commitment and willingness to put forth the necessary effort that will help you effect change in the face of time and budget constraints and that will guide you through the process of deciding what to do next.



***Prioritize recruitment of male volunteers with respect to your other responsibilities.***

Neither the volunteer coordinators nor the male volunteers who participated in this study were blind to the obstacles of time and finance that recruiters may encounter. Several interviewees offered advice to that effect, ranging from the “just do it” variety to underscoring the need for patience in recruitment of male volunteers. Some also commented that your efforts do not need to occur overnight and if they did, your organization might not be prepared to handle the subsequent onslaught of male volunteers.

Regardless of your style of implementing change, however, you may find that jotting down your thoughts about why male volunteers are important to your program will clarify ways in which their inclusion affects the mission of your agency, and making that connection will help you to prioritize their recruitment. A more formal exposition might justify the time and money you want to spend recruiting male volunteers to anyone who questions your decision to do so. Defining the urgency of enlisting male volunteers relative to your other responsibilities—and understanding how inclusion of men coalesces with those responsibilities—may also help you to foresee how you might get sidetracked by your day-to-day duties and how to keep working on increasing your numbers of male volunteers even when that is not your primary activity.



***Plan what to do next.*** Once you have a sense of where recruitment of male volunteers fits into the rest of your work life, then you can create a plan for implementing your ideas. You may have found some of the strategies offered here to

be readily applicable to your organization, while others seemed like a bit of a stretch or irrelevant to what you do. Although starting with the tactics you are most comfortable with may be the most logical approach, consider rewording those irrelevant strategies to see how the concepts might eventually be adjusted to make sense in the unique context of your organization.

Furthermore, discussion of the various challenges might help you make connections to your situation, so you may want to add the topic of male volunteerism to the agenda of your next staff meeting or request a discussion at a meeting of local volunteer administrators. Also talk with your male volunteers to see if they agree with the strategies here and what their experiences have been. Debate is crucial to spawning new ideas and getting feedback about your plans. Indeed, as noted in the Preface, testing and challenging the notions presented in this booklet is a necessary continuation of your reading.



***Prepare to retain your male volunteers and treat them fairly.*** Of course, if you are successful recruiting, you do not want to steer men right back toward the door or lose female volunteers due to your management of male volunteers. One pitfall to avoid is treating your male volunteers as if they are idols to be put on a pedestal. In *Still A Man's World: Men Who Do "Women's Work"*, researcher Christine Williams suggests that sometimes men in occupations dominated by women encounter a "glass escalator" effect, in which they are promoted or given additional responsibilities in numbers disproportionate to women. Be aware of applying the "glass escalator" to volunteerism and giving men leadership or coordination responsibilities too soon or without regard to female volunteers.<sup>16</sup> Another error to avoid is treating men (and women) as low-level "helpers" rather than valuing and respecting them. Remember that you may need to use the same effort and creativity you used recruiting men to keep them among your ranks.

Most importantly, know that the recruitment of male volunteers will take time and should not be a chore. Would-be recruits will likely take note and politely decline your invitation to join your volunteer pool if you are not enjoying the recruitment process. Be patient, be creative, and have fun. Now that the fruits of one research study are at your fingertips, it is up to you to decide how and whether to use this information for the betterment of your volunteers, your organization, and, of course, your clients.

## **Appendix A:**

### **The ramifications of recruiting male volunteers**

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The purpose of this section is to instigate your thinking about how increasing the number of male volunteers will affect both tangible and intangible aspects of social services and volunteerism. The research participants expressed a range of opinions about how the recruitment of male volunteers could impact programs, clients, communities, the nature of volunteerism, and men's lives. What follows is an assessment tool to help you gauge

the importance of each of the impacts and sort through the pros and cons of recruiting male volunteers.

The worksheets in the next few pages are organized by categories such as the impact on clients or the impact on men of including male volunteers. However, most outcomes are intertwined: something that affects your agency, for example, will likely trickle down to your clients or your volunteers, and vice versa. Each worksheet has a checklist to help you identify situations that are relevant to you and consider possible effects of including male volunteers given that situation. Each checklist item also has an explanation of the rationale behind the conclusions drawn. These explanations come both from the interviews with participants and from my assumptions as a researcher (see “What is the background of this project?” in the Introduction). You may or may not agree with them.

Likewise, some of the items in the checklists are accompanied by more than one possible outcome, which reflects the varied opinions of participants. Indeed, including male volunteers may have any number of effects on a given situation, but those mentioned by participants are primarily what are noted here. You may want to pay particular attention to conditions in which you do not see “both sides of the story,” for you may disagree with the perspective given. Active reading is crucial throughout this section so that you conscientiously think about how recruiting male volunteers might affect *your* microcosm of social service.

### ***How do you know if your organization should recruit more male volunteers?***

As you read through the checklists, ask yourself these questions:

- 8 Does this situation apply to my organization?
- 8 Might a similar situation apply to my organization?
- 8 How realistic or probable is this outcome for my situation?
- 8 What other effects might there be in this situation?
- 8 Does this situation apply to all male volunteers or only certain types of men or certain personalities?
- 8 Is this a positive or negative outcome for my situation?
- 8 Do I agree with the rationale behind this outcome? Are the assumptions valid?
- 8 What assumptions have I made about my organization, clientele, men and women, etc. when thinking about this situation and effect?
- 8 How important is this situation and its outcome relative to the others?

Once you have identified which situations apply to your particular circumstance, rank them by their long-term importance. If the outcomes most significant to you are negative, then you may want to reconsider recruiting male volunteers or think more about how to avoid that negative consequence. On the other hand, if the positive outcomes outweigh the negative, then you should feel confident in your decision to recruit more men.

## ***Programmatic and organizational impact***

### **Do you...**

- 1 have a waiting list for male clients, reluctantly match female volunteers with male clients, or limit your services because you do not have enough volunteers?

< *Male volunteers may allow you to serve more male clients, match males with males, or expand your services.*

**Rationale:** Assuming that more is better, male volunteers in sheer numbers might improve your services.

- 1 have trouble finding interesting work for your current volunteers?

< *Adding male volunteers or turning away volunteers may result in a negative volunteer experience for bored volunteers or overwhelmed volunteer coordinators.*

**Rationale:** More is not always better. In sheer numbers, more male volunteers might overwhelm you.

- 1 want diverse perspectives and experiences in your volunteer pool?

< *You may gain new ideas and feedback from male volunteers.*

**Rationale:** If gender is one aspect of diversity, the inclusion of male volunteers may bring the richness of experience you desire.

- 1 work with staff who supervise volunteers or who have resisted recruitment of male volunteers in the past?

< *Adding men to your program too quickly may generate confusion, more work, or resentment.*

**Rationale:** Increasing your male volunteer base obviously changes the demographics of your organization. Your recruitment of men might provoke a negative response among co-workers who have not been included in your efforts or among those whose work load is affected by supervision of volunteers. The possibility of resentment or anger may be especially pertinent in organizations that have traditionally worked without male staff or volunteers. The very concept of including men may require some time for adjustment.

- 1 want to expand your agency's "support base" of donors, volunteers, in-kind services, etc.?

< *Male volunteers increase your access to those resources.*

**Rationale:** If men control or influence some of the resources that could directly or indirectly affect your organization, you may be able to tap into those resources through your volunteer pool.

- 1 want to have male volunteers in the future?

< *Having male volunteers now may help you recruit more men later.*

**Rationale:** The assumption here is that men can recruit men, both actively and by setting an example of what men can do within your organization.

1 want to have more families volunteering together?

< *Including male volunteers may bring in whole families or increase the likelihood that men in other volunteers' families will participate.*

**Rationale:** Some men may exercise decision-making power within families that could cause other family members to volunteer. With the example of a few male volunteers, other men may follow suit.

1 expect volunteers to come to you with the skills needed to do perform their work, or do you provide extensive training?

< *If you are not able to find men who already have the skills needed to volunteer, you may need to create a training program or advertise that which you already have.*

**Rationale:** Some participants observed that volunteer coordinators may be challenged to find men with the required skills for their volunteer positions. If that is the case, volunteer coordinators may need to develop programs to train men in those skills, or they may need to emphasize the availability of trainings in recruitment materials.

1 have rules about how clients are matched with volunteers (e.g. those limiting interaction between male volunteers and female clients)?

< *Those rules may need to be adjusted or taken into account when recruiting male volunteers.*

**Rationale:** Rules presumably exist for a reason. You may need to examine whether those rules are affected by an increased number of male volunteers, how the rules might be adjusted, or whether they are still needed at all.

### ***Impact on clients***

#### **Do your clients...**

1 sometimes feel more comfortable, express themselves differently, or have more fun with men?

< *Male volunteers may enhance the experience of those clients.*

**Rationale:** Assuming that gender is a source of identification, role modeling, and behavioral influence, male clients may appreciate the presence of and interaction with male volunteers.

1 sometimes feel more comfortable, express themselves differently, or have more fun with women?

< *Male volunteers may detract from the experience of those clients.*

**Rationale:** If increasing the number of male volunteers upsets or offends your clientele, or causes them to feel less comfortable in your program, they may not experience the full benefit of your services.

1 usually see men in negative contexts (as disciplinarian, for example), or have they had negative experiences (such as abuse) with men?

< *Male volunteers could exemplify the ways in which men can do and be good.*

< *Male volunteers could seem threatening or untrustworthy to the clients.*

**Rationale:** At stake here is the safe space that social service agencies strive to create for their clients. If you have the resources and skills to help clients work through gender labeling and prejudice, then male volunteers may be wonderful positive role models. If, on the other hand, including male volunteers jeopardizes the safe space of clients because you cannot help them work through their past experience with men, male volunteers may have a negative impact on your clientele.

1 stereotype men?

< *Male volunteers may redefine perceptions of men or masculinity.*

**Rationale:** The assumption here is that social service volunteering does not already fall within traditional conceptions of masculinity.

1 lack men in their lives in general?

< *Male volunteers may fill that void.*

**Rationale:** This outcome is dependent upon male volunteers who spend enough time with clients to be incorporated into their lives.

1 come from a culture that forbids some level of interaction between men and women?

< *Including male volunteers may be offensive or insensitive to female clients.*

**Rationale:** Because cultural taboo and socialization can be deeply ingrained, anything that conflicts with them should be handled carefully.

### ***Impact on public awareness of social service issues***

#### **Do you...**

1 want to draw attention to the importance of an issue (sexual assault, disability, corrections, hunger, etc.) for funding, legislation, or other resources that require public support?

< *Male volunteers may demonstrate that the issue is not solely a “women’s issue” or “men’s issue,” but important to all.*

< *Adding male volunteers may lessen the impact of those who are already talking.*

**Rationale:** The primary assumptions here are that “women’s issues” or social service issues may be deemed less important when men are not involved, and that the influence of volunteers extends beyond their allotted time and work within an organization. When men do become involved with those issues, participants suggested the two possible outcomes above. The first outcome implies again that more is better and that the greater involvement of men might lend weight to an issue.

Conversely, the second outcome implies that men’s opinions are most prominent in contexts where they are not often heard (think of the notice taken when a man speaks out conversationally about domestic violence). Some participants suggested that if there were more men doing social service work and talking about it, their opinions might blend into

women's and become mundane, rather than carrying the punch that they are presumed to carry with limited involvement of men.

1 want to reach niches of male interest, social circles of men, or men who only listen to men? Do you want to reach families, friends, or co-workers through your volunteers?

< *Male volunteers may be able to help you do so, both through direct education and casual conversation.*

< *Men may not share their volunteer experiences with others any more than women do.*

**Rationale:** The first outcome suggests, as one participant stated, "the more male voices, the more male ears." Other participants, however, indicated that some men, like some women, may be modest, quiet, isolated, or keep their personal interests to themselves, which leads to the second outcome. Still others said that women may say more than men do about their volunteer experiences to their children or co-workers.

1 want a new perspective about an issue to reach the community?

< *Male volunteers could bring that perspective to discussions outside of your agency.*

**Rationale:** This outcome again assumes that gender is one aspect of diversity and that the influence of volunteers extends beyond their allotted time and work within an organization.

1 want to change male behavior or attitudes for the sake of your clientele (as with domestic violence)?

< *Male volunteers may add credibility to your efforts in the eyes of other men (and find their own behavior and attitudes changed as well).*

**Rationale:** If the influence of volunteers extends beyond their allotted time and work within your organization, and gender is a source of identification, role modeling, and behavioral influence, then male volunteers may be able to affect other men with their experiences.

### ***Impact on volunteerism and social services***

#### **Do you...**

1 work primarily with female volunteers and staff?

< *Male volunteers diversify the circle of people with whom volunteers can interact, work, and make decisions.*

< *Including male volunteers may change the comfort level, humor, and conversations within an organization.*

**Rationale:** Gender is one aspect of diversity. Workers in an organization that has traditionally been a single-sex operation may be ready for the richness of a gender-mixed environment. On the other hand, female staff and volunteers may also notice that their day-to-day interactions with co-workers change in the presence of men, for better or worse.

1 have a few male volunteers already?

< *Increasing the number of men may add to the comfort of those you have.*

**Rationale:** Assuming that gender is a source of identification, role modeling, and behavioral influence, male volunteers may enjoy the company of other men.

1 think that the office environment in social service work is different from other types of work?

< *Male volunteers could change both the dynamics and nature of volunteerism by making it more like “the rat race.”*

**Rationale:** Men may change social service volunteering as much as social service volunteering may change men. A few participants mentioned the possibility that some men carry with them to volunteerism some of the competition and stress that characterize their work life. If the negative or demanding aspects of paid employment were to filter into volunteerism, both volunteers and organizations might be affected, especially if that kind of environment were unfamiliar to them.

1 want to see more people proactively changing the world around them?

< *Including male volunteers may increase the number of people who are active players in social change.*

**Rationale:** The assumption of this outcome is that volunteering helps to create, in the words of one participant, “concerned and active citizens” and is part of “belonging to a participatory democracy.”

### ***Impact on men***

#### **Are some men...**

1 given limited freedom to care for others in any way other than financially?

< *Adding male volunteers to your program may help to create an environment in which men are encouraged and expected to care for others with time or relationships, rather than with money.*

**Rationale:** The assumption here is that some men must put more of their time and energy into financial responsibility than they do volunteering. With increased numbers of male volunteers in social service, however, the tide might turn in such a way that balances financial responsibilities with community responsibilities.

1 negatively stereotyped (as aggressive, uncaring, self-serving, etc.) or prejudged (as criminals, molesters, abusers, etc.)?

< *Widespread volunteering among men might reduce negative stereotypes of men and foster positive images of men in society.*

**Rationale:** If stereotypes can change, then volunteering may generate positive images of volunteers.

1 unprepared when social service issues touch their lives (when an adolescent son or daughter becomes homeless, for example)?

< *Including male volunteers may lead to their increased knowledge or understanding, which may help them cope with issues in their own lives.*

**Rationale:** This outcome assumes that people can learn and grow through volunteering.

<sup>1</sup> “missing out” on the rewards (tangible and intangible) of volunteering?

< *Including male volunteers gives more men the opportunity to experience the benefits of volunteering.*

**Rationale:** Assuming there are rewards inherent to volunteering, men who are not volunteering are not enjoying such benefits.

## **Appendix B: Research methodology**

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### ***Goals and definitions***

This project commenced in September 1998, with the following goals guiding my investigations:

- ∇ Determine the current role of male volunteers and the circumstances in which they are incorporated into social service programs.
- ∇ Investigate why men do or do not volunteer for social service programs.
- ∇ Investigate men’s opinions about volunteerism.
- ∇ Identify barriers to recruiting male volunteers and means of overcoming those barriers.
- ∇ Assess the potential impact(s) of a paradigm shift in volunteerism that incorporates men into the social services in new or different ways.

As noted in the Introduction (“What kind of research led to this guide?”), I used the following working definitions as parameters for my research:

**Volunteer coordinators** recruit, “hire,” or work with volunteers, and are paid professionals spending some portion of their time doing this kind of work.

**Male volunteers** are men currently providing direct social service through organized volunteer programs or men who have done so recently. Included as “volunteers” are men receiving a stipend for their service.

**Social service programs** are those that work directly with clients (such as child, adult, elderly, homeless, disabled, incarcerated, immigrant and refugee populations) and provide a wide range of social services (including educational support, mentoring, recreation, care giving, counseling, advocacy, food and shelter aid, professional assistance, art and computer instruction, and health care). This perception of “social services” was synthesized from several encyclopedias and dictionaries into a composite definition which reads, “Social services advance

human welfare by bettering social conditions in a community and helping people attain their full potential or by encouraging the constructive involvement of society in caring for its members.”

### ***Data collection***

Interviews were the primary form of data collection for this research. Seventy-one interviews were conducted from October 1998 to March 1999, taking place primarily in the metropolitan area of a Pacific Northwest city. Forty of the interviewees were volunteer coordinators, who were selected randomly or by referral and who agreed to participate. Volunteer coordinators referred me to the 31 male volunteers who compose the remainder of my sample. Not every volunteer coordinator made a referral, and some made more than one. All told, male volunteer participants were connected to 23 of the above agencies. Interviews were conversational and most questions were open-ended. Depending on location and consent of the participant, most interviews were recorded and later transcribed. If the session was not taped, notes were taken and also transcribed.

In addition to being interviewed, male volunteer participants completed a short demographic survey, the results of which are described below. Demographic data were not collected for volunteer coordinators. Although I intended to triangulate the words of my interviewees with the academic literature on male volunteerism, I found very little work of that nature available in journals or other materials. Such information is therefore explicitly referenced only on occasion in the above guide.

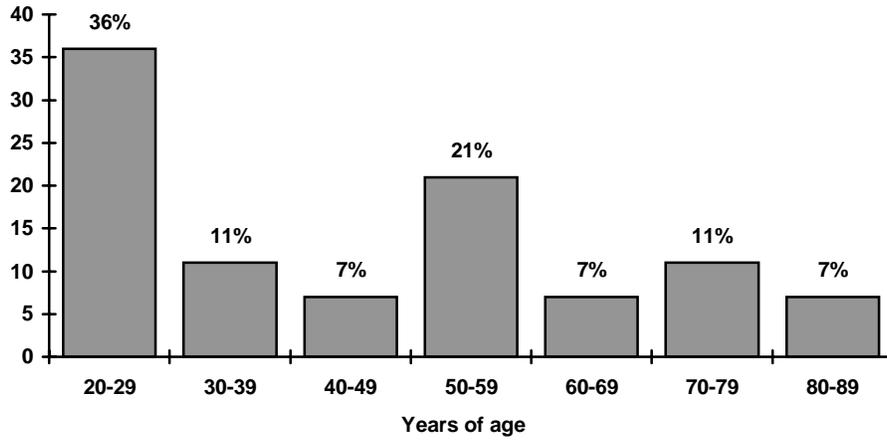
### ***Participant sample***

Although I did not collect standardized information about volunteer coordinators or their social service organizations, interviews unveiled an extensive range of experiences and affiliations. Volunteer coordinators represented programs large and small covering the multitude of social service areas described in the above definition. The agency sample included religious and collegiate affiliations and both publicly and privately funded programs. Some volunteer coordinators were new to their positions and the profession; others had years of experience.

The data describing male volunteers is more complete and uniform. The information below recounts the results of the survey given to them at the beginning of the interview session. Responses were calculated using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), and the values shown here represent the valid percent, with non-respondents factored out of the equation.

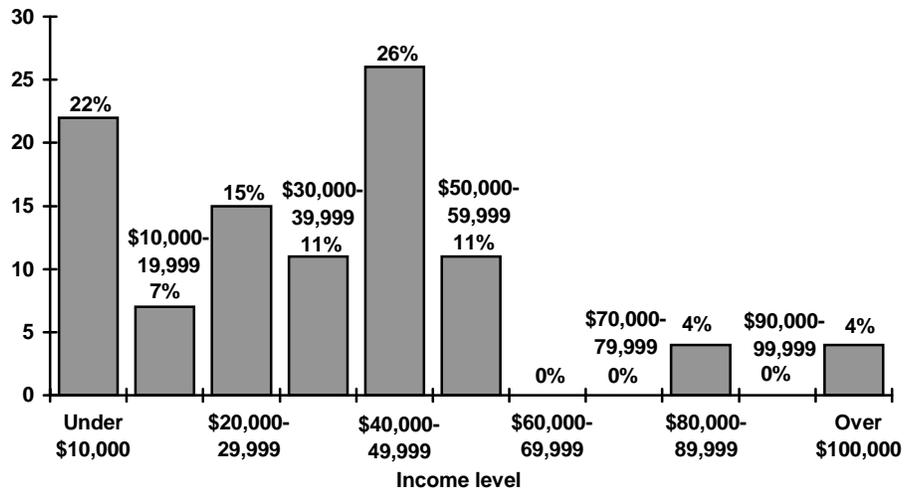
Percentage of Participants

### Age

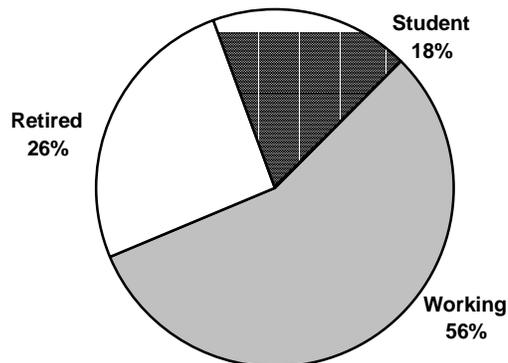


Percentage of Participants

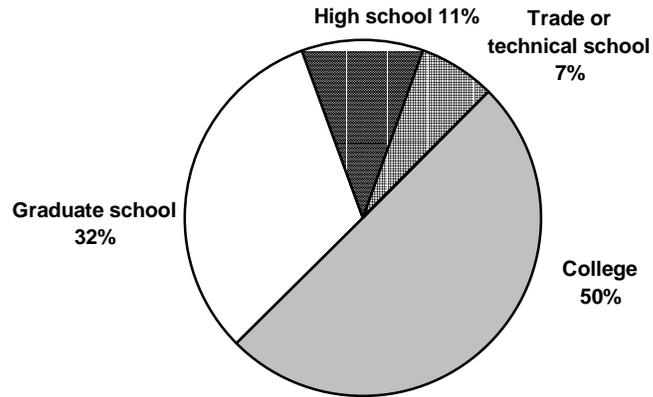
### Annual income



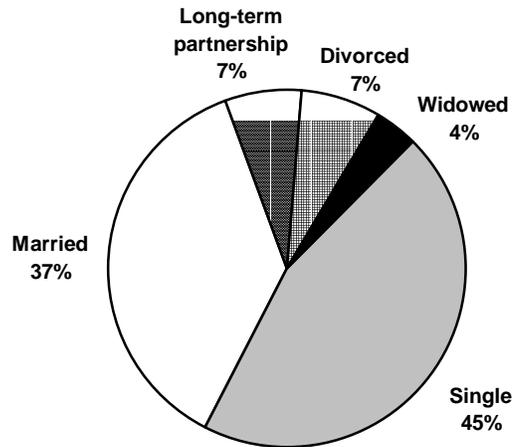
Work status



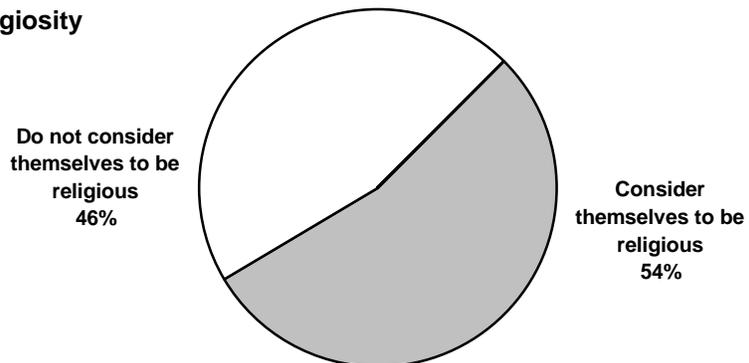
### Educational attainment



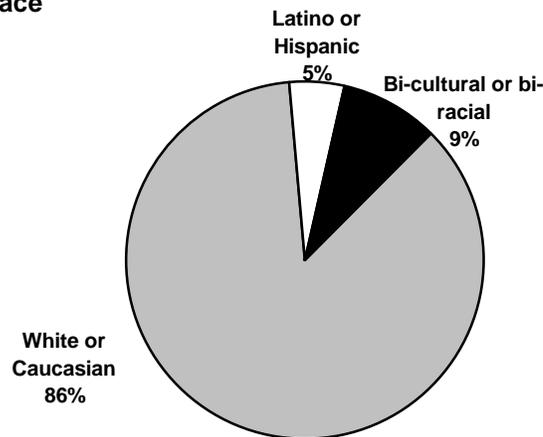
### Family status



### Religiosity



### Identified race

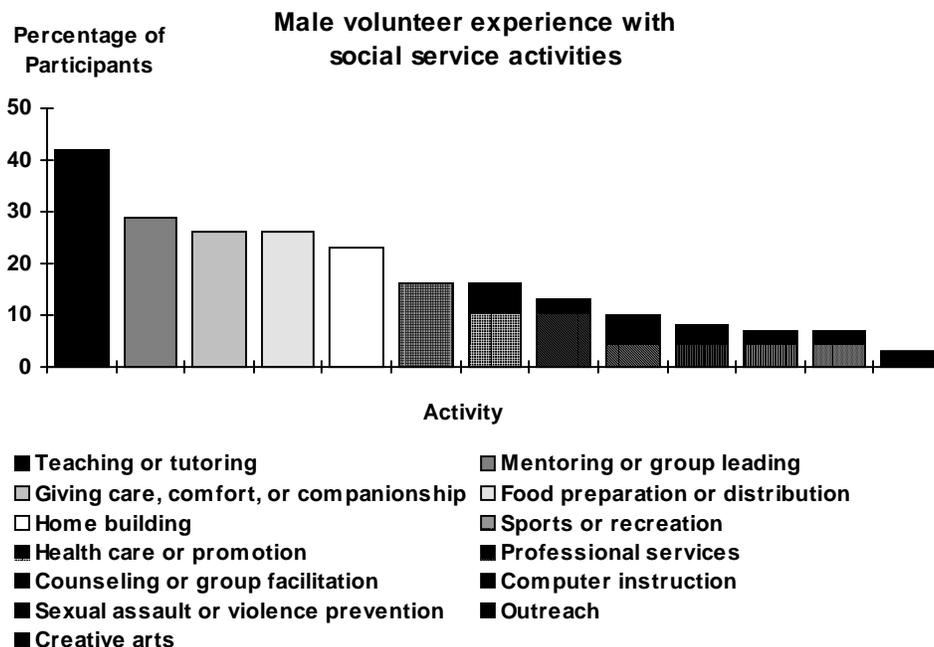
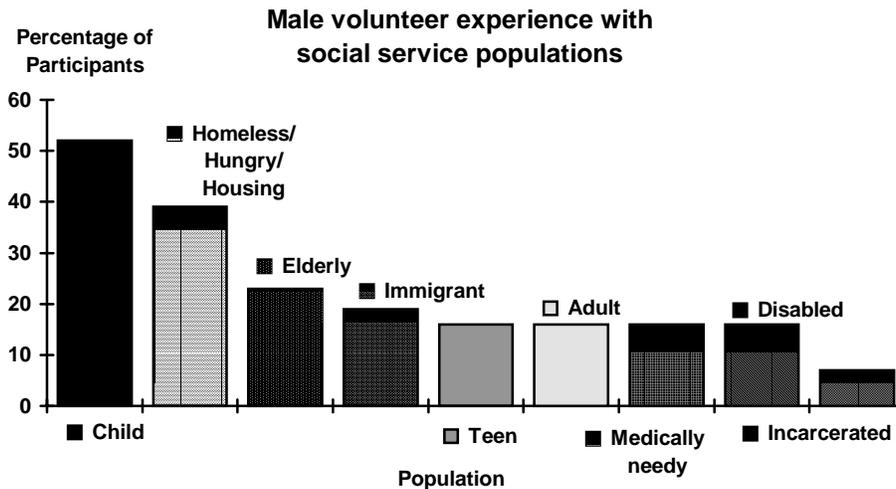


Participants reported spending a median of 20 hours each month volunteering, which parallels the 4.8 hours per week of larger volunteer surveys including men and women.<sup>17</sup> My sample was a highly educated group, which is not too surprising in light of other research indicating that volunteerism increases with education.<sup>18</sup> Even allowing for diverse racial representation among non-respondents, my sample was more homogenous in that respect than other studies.<sup>19</sup> The relatively low income of so many participants in my sample can in part be accounted for by students and stipended volunteers participating in full or part-time service programs such as AmeriCorps.

These demographics may have implications for the content of this guide. Given the relative racial homogeneity of the male volunteer sample, for example, the challenges and strategies discussed in this booklet may be most applicable to men of European descent. If readers are targeting men from a specific ethnic or racial background, they might consider taking extra time to think about, research, or discuss the relevance of certain strategies for that population of men. Likewise, the high level of educational attainment found among my sample could have affected data by revealing challenges and strategies that are most relevant to highly educated men.

It is important to remember when discussing these implications, however, that the material in the guide was not weighted relative to demographic representation. In other words, the ideas of students, who compose 18% of the sample, are given the same consideration in the guide as those of workers, who form a much greater percentage of the sample. Nevertheless, further research, as discussed below, might strive to include a more stratified sample to foster the identification of ideas that represent all men, not just the select few interviewed for my research.

Male volunteer participants also revealed information about their backgrounds with varying kinds of volunteer activities over the course of interviews. The following graphs summarize the experience of male volunteers in different social service areas. Because volunteer coordinators often drew from their past experiences as volunteers and with other agencies, but were not explicitly asked about their past work as male volunteers were, their experience is not quantified here. Each of the social service areas in which male volunteers had experience, however, was also represented by at least one volunteer coordinator. Consistent with the use of percentages throughout this text, the numbers here signify the percentage of male volunteers who clearly mentioned experience in each of the categories. Most participants had experience in more than one category.



Furthermore, 58% of participants indicated that they were currently involved with more than one volunteer activity, and 84% referred to volunteer work they had done in the past. Thirty-two percent of the male volunteers had served on boards or committees in addition to doing direct service work, and 39% had experience with volunteer leadership or coordination. Sixteen percent of the men were enrolled in stipended full or part-time national service programs such as AmeriCorps and Foster Grandparents. Another 13% were volunteering in their “spare time” when the interviews took place but were considering long-term volunteer programs such as Peace Corps or Jesuit Volunteer Corps in the future.

In sum, this sample was, for the most part, a very active and experienced group. This bias may be due to the fact that male volunteers were referred to me by volunteer coordinators, who may have asked particularly enthusiastic volunteers to speak with me. While their range of experiences and knowledge about volunteerism may have enhanced the ideas that they brought forth in interviews, such understanding may also have limited the extent to which they could recount why other men *do not* volunteer.

### ***Additional results***

My interviews generated a number of interesting results in addition to those discussed throughout the body of this guide. Among them are the following findings, some of which expand upon the ideas raised previously:

- ∇ Almost a third (32%) of male volunteers reported volunteering during childhood or high school, often in small or cohesive communities in which people took care of each other as a rule.
- ∇ Thirty-two percent of male volunteers suggested that they might be different from other men in their comfort level with the social service environment, working with women, or taking direction from others.
- ∇ Of the 18 participants who addressed “diversity,” three said that the recruitment of racially or ethnically diverse volunteers was or should be more important than the recruitment of male volunteers.
- ∇ When asked (in one of my few “yes” or “no” questions), 62% of male volunteers said that they had a role model (such as a parent or neighbor) for volunteerism, and 75% considered themselves to be or hoped to be considered role models of volunteerism for others.

Again, these results must be interpreted with caution because of the varying course of conversations with participants. These data are thought provoking, however, in their possible implications for understanding motivations for volunteering or dimensions of diversity.

Moreover, because my conversations with male volunteers and volunteer coordinators did not follow the same format, differences between the comments of the two groups can only be presumed with caution. Nevertheless, a few trends are worth recognizing,

especially for comments that were particularly lopsided in the type of participant who made them. This table distinguishes between male volunteers and volunteer coordinators for the purpose of noting which type of participant made the given remark most frequently:

| <b>Comment:</b>   | <b>Volunteer coordinators</b> | <b>Male volunteers</b> |
|---|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| General publicity about a program facilitates recruitment (n = 16) .                    | 81%                           | 19%                    |
| Newspapers reach a limited audience for volunteer recruitment (n = 20).                 | 33%                           | 67%                    |
| Men are not focused on volunteerism or “tuned in” to appeals for volunteers (n = 11).   | 27%                           | 73%                    |
| Men need to be able to try volunteering without making a long-term commitment (n = 13). | 31%                           | 69%                    |
| Men are uncomfortable with emotional commitments or relationships (n = 16).             | 33%                           | 67%                    |
| Women are better “nurturers” than men or are perceived that way (n = 17).               | 35%                           | 65%                    |
| Focusing on challenge, opportunity, or skills might help to recruit more men (n = 12).  | 67%                           | 33%                    |

These findings may indicate a gap in the thinking of volunteer coordinators and the men they are trying to reach. When, for example, a volunteer coordinator consistently sends out press releases and works with the media to publicize a program, that person’s time may not have been well spent if men are not “tuned in” to that kind of information. Likewise the discomfort or perceived skill level of men in nurturing positions might remind volunteer coordinators of a need to reassure men of their abilities, offer training, or offer alternative kinds of volunteer work. The next section also addresses the importance of these findings for further research topics.

### ***Limitations and further research***

As exploratory research, this investigation opens many doors for future study and must also be recognized in its limitations. I have already noted the inherent limitations of this research: my participants came from within the field of social service, were asked to distinguish between male and female volunteerism, and were a highly active and enthusiastic sample (especially the male volunteers). The racial, geographic, and educational homogeneity of my sample leaves open the possibility that the strategies and challenges of this guide may only be applicable to certain populations. Moreover, my position as a woman interviewing men about male volunteerism may have affected participants’ comfort in disclosing information about themselves or their peers. Likewise, my conversational interview style lends itself to ideas more than numbers, leading to percentages that are less straightforward than quantitative research data.

On the other hand, that same interview style yielded a profusion of ideas which have remained unexplored under the time constraints of this project. As a subject matter, male

volunteerism is rich with potential. Among the possibilities for further inquiry are the following research topics, which have occurred to me over the course of my work:

- A systematic piloting and testing of the strategies of this guide
- A quantitative or qualitative research investigating the differences among men (of different races, ages, religions, socio-economic positions, etc.) in regards to volunteerism
- A comparison of perceptions of the characteristics of “a good volunteer” between volunteering and non-volunteering men or volunteer coordinators
- Aan analysis of the correlation between volunteer recruitment material and male volunteer participation
- A surveying the opinions about service of men who do not volunteer
- A a comparison of male and female volunteerism
- A an analysis of the effects of service learning on male volunteerism
- A a comparison of recruitment techniques for volunteer and military service, or corporate recruitment
- A the portrayal of male volunteerism in the entertainment industry
- A the relationship between gender identity and male volunteerism
- A a comparison between social service volunteerism and volunteerism in other fields

I truly hope that this research is a springboard for others who are willing to delve into the topic of male volunteerism and continue to advance the field of service through any such investigations. To that end, my suggestions about sources of additional information follow in Appendix C.

## **Appendix C: Resources**

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### ***National Service Fellows program***

The back of the inside title page of this booklet provides a background of the National Service Fellows program. Descriptions of the research of the 1998-1999 class of Fellows, as well as much of the complete work of the 1997-1998 Fellows, are available on the web. Topics vary widely, but all are related to service. Please refer to the web site of the Corporation for National Service (<http://www.nationalservice.org>) for additional information.

If you have specific questions or comments about this study, I welcome your feedback, though I do not guarantee answers beyond what is offered here. Please direct any such communication to my e-mail address: [sblackman2@hotmail.com](mailto:sblackman2@hotmail.com).

### ***Organizations***

I have found numerous organizations to be helpful to me in my investigations. This list is by no means comprehensive, but reflects a sampling of the kinds of places that have

facilitated this research. The organizations referenced within “Reports from the Field” are not included again here.

For information about **national service programs** (AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps\*VISTA, AmeriCorps\*NCCC, RSVP, Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and Learn and Serve America), contact:

The Corporation for National Service  
1201 New York Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20525  
Telephone: (202) 606-5000  
TDD: (202) 565-2799  
Web site: <http://www.nationalservice.org>

For information about **volunteer management**, contact:

The Association for Volunteer Administration  
3108 North Parham Road  
P.O. Box 32092  
Richmond, Virginia 23294  
Telephone: (804) 346-2266  
Fax: (804) 346-3318  
E-mail: [avaintl@mindspring.com](mailto:avaintl@mindspring.com)  
Web site: <http://www.avaintl.org>

or visit these web sites:

<http://www.cybervpm.com>  
<http://www.energizeinc.com>  
<http://www.volunteertoday.com>  
<http://www.serviceleader.org>  
<http://www.impactonline.com>  
<http://www.merrillassoc.com>

For information about trends and issues in the **non-profit world**, contact:

Independent Sector  
1200 Eighteenth Street, NW  
Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20036  
Telephone: (202) 467-6100  
Fax: (202) 467-6101  
E-mail: [info@IndependentSector.org](mailto:info@IndependentSector.org)  
Web site: <http://www.IndependentSector.org>

or

The Nonprofit Risk Management Center  
1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20036  
Telephone: (202) 785-3891  
Fax: (202) 296-0349  
Web site: <http://www.nonprofitrisk.org>

For information about **men's studies**, contact:

The American Men's Studies Association  
222 East Street  
Northampton, Massachusetts 01060

or visit these web sites:

<http://www.vix.com/men/index.html>  
<http://www.themenscenter.com>

### ***Reading materials***

Likewise, countless books have provoked my thinking about male volunteerism in the social services. I recommend the following books to anyone interested in learning more about these issues—again, they are just a sampling of materials:

*101 Tips for Volunteer Recruitment*  
Steve McCurley and Sue Vineyard  
Heritage Arts Publishing, 1988  
ISBN: 0911029133

*Fire In the Belly*  
Sam Keen  
Bantam Books, 1991  
ISBN: 0553071882

*Marketing for Dummies*  
Alexander Hiam  
IDG Books, 1997  
ISBN: 1568846991

*Megatrends and Volunteerism: Mapping the Future of Volunteer Programs*  
Sue Vineyard  
Heritage Arts Publishing, 1993  
ISBN: 0911029435

*Older Volunteers*

Lucy Rose Fischer  
Sage Publications, 1993  
ISBN: 080395008X

*Slow Motion: Changing Masculinities Changing Men*

Lynn Segal  
Rutgers University Press, 1996  
ISBN: U813516196

*Still a Man's World: Men Who Do "Women's Work"*

Christine Williams  
University of California Press, 1995  
ISBN: 0520087879

*The Volunteer Recruitment Book*

Susan Ellis  
Energize, Inc., 1994  
ISBN: 0940576155

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## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Independent Sector. (1998, December 5). <http://www.indepsec.org/programs/research/charts/chart/.html> [On-line].

<sup>2</sup> Points of Light Foundation. (1998, December 12). <http://www.pointsoflight.org/volunteercenters/VolunteerFactsStatsSheet001.htm> [On-line].

<sup>3</sup> All quotations refer to personal communications with research participants conducted between October 26, 1998 and March 9, 1999.

<sup>4</sup> Reach Me Inc. (1999, May 13). <http://www.angelfire.com/tx/reachme/> [On-line].

<sup>5</sup> National Foundation to Prevent Child Abuse. (1999, May 13). <http://www.childsexualabuse.org/act.htm> [On-line].

<sup>6</sup> Points of Light Foundation. (1998, December 1). <http://www.pointsoflight.org/volunteercenters/VolunteerFactsStatsSheet001.htm> [On-line].

<sup>7</sup> Miller, William. (1997). *Industry Week*. 246 (16) p. 13.

<sup>8</sup> City Cares of America. (1999, April 16). Profile statement.

<sup>9</sup> "Types of shiftwork schedules." (1997, August 8). *The Oregonian*. Portland, Oregon. Sunrise Edition, B01.

<sup>10</sup> Administration on Aging. (1999, May 13). <http://www.aoa.dhhs.gov/factsheets/volunteer.html> [On-line].

- <sup>11</sup> Independent Sector. (1999, May 13).  
[http://www.indepsec.org/programs/research/senior\\_volunteers\\_in\\_america.html](http://www.indepsec.org/programs/research/senior_volunteers_in_america.html) [On-line].
- <sup>12</sup> Office of Management and Budget. (1999, April 16). <http://www.ombwatch.org> [On-line].
- <sup>13</sup> Points of Light Foundation. (1998, December 1).  
<http://www.pointsoflight.org/volunteercenters/VolunteerFactsStatsSheet001.htm> [On-line].
- <sup>14</sup> Watters, Barbara. (1995). "Are costs beneficial for motivating individuals to volunteer?" *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*. 25 (9) pp. 752-759.
- <sup>15</sup> Campus Compact. (1999, May 13). <http://www.compact.org/news/trend.html> [On-line].
- <sup>16</sup> Williams, Christine. (1995). *Still A Man's World: Men Who Do "Women's Work."* Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 147.
- <sup>17</sup> Points of Light Foundation. (1998, December 1).  
<http://www.pointsoflight.org/volunteercenters/VolunteerFactsStatsSheet001.htm> [On-line];  
Independent Sector. (1998, December 5).  
<http://www.indepsec.org/programs/research/charts/chart/.html> [On-line]; "Who are America's Volunteers." *CQ Researcher*. 6 (46) p.1084.
- <sup>18</sup> "Who are America's Volunteers." *CQ Researcher*. 6 (46) p.1084.
- <sup>19</sup> Independent Sector. (1998, December 5). <http://www.indepsec.org/programs/research/charts/chart/.html> [On-line]. "Who are America's Volunteers." *CQ Researcher*. 6 (46) p.1084.