

2009

Cultivating Hospital Volunteers and Auxiliary Board Leadership: THE NEXT GENERATION

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Cultivating Hospital Volunteers and Auxiliary Board Leadership: THE NEXT GENERATION

Team Vision, Grace E. Harris Leadership Institute 2009

Project Description and Goals

In spring 2009, Team Vision accepted the challenge from the VCUHS Hospital Auxiliary Board to assist in increasing the auxiliary volunteer population. After meeting with the Auxiliary Board, Volunteer Services, and John Duvall (team mentor), Team Vision proposed a project that would look more globally at volunteer recruitment, training and placement, and retention. As the project evolved, we also examined how the two organizations could draw on their deep experience and resources not only to develop a robust volunteer population, but to develop and strengthen their own organizations to better define their goals and ensure an Auxiliary Board membership of vitality and longevity.

Team Vision is:

- Martha Clements, MEd, Director, Office of Continuing Education and Faculty Development
- Nicole Dailey, Sergeant, Assistant Security Commander, VCU Police Department
- Ingrid Mercer, MPA, Director, Immigration Services, Office of International Education
- Kelli Parmley, MPA, Assistant Vice Provost, Center for Institutional Effectiveness
- Michelle Peace, PhD, Associate Chair, Department of Forensic Science
- Jennifer Thompson, J.D., Assistant Professor & Director of External Relations, L. Douglas Wilder School
- **Mentor:** Mr. John Duval, Chief Executive Operator, VCU Hospitals

Phase I – Research

During the research phase, our team met several times with the Auxiliary and Volunteer Services to get a better understanding of current practices and cooperation between the two units.

We also interviewed auxiliary and volunteer services units at (peer) academic medical facilities similar to VCUHS in terms of size, urban locality, and access to undergraduate population. Our interview questions covered structure and organization, recruitment, orientation and training, placement, and retention.

Phase II – Synthesis and Conclusions- Setting a Course for “the Next Generation”

We determined that VCUHS Auxiliary and Volunteer Services are related to each other much as these entities in the peer schools. Our Auxiliary and Volunteer Services also employed some of the same basic recruiting methods of the peer schools. However, we found a sharper detail in the peer schools’ volunteer position needs and volunteer responsibilities, and stronger role definition and communication between peer school auxiliary boards and volunteers services offices. This led us to believe that recruitment itself might not be the Auxiliary’s key obstacle.

Team Vision recommendations include some basic changes: creating an easy-to-find VCUHS volunteer website and volunteer application; increasing volunteer orientation session availability; clearly defining volunteer positions in terms of staffing hours, useful skills, etc.; and setting expected commitments from volunteers—particularly for students who may need a reference letter for future academic pursuits.

Although we don’t add committee meetings lightly, it’s clear that the Auxiliary Board and Volunteer Services need a better venue for sharing ideas, expectations and goals. We recommend forming an “Active Membership Committee” made of members from the two groups. The committee could not only clarify the volunteer staffing

needs above, but also the perceived ambiguities between the Auxiliary and Volunteer Services' roles and responsibilities, thus strengthening mutual understanding.

We also began to notice some concern from the Auxiliary Board regarding a lack of new membership and leadership. Therefore, we are recommending the creation of a "Visioning Committee." This would be an opportunity for the Auxiliary to do a deep self-examination and let them imagine what they might like to be in five, 10 or 20 years as far as organizational objectives and composition.

Phase III – Presentation

Team Vision plans to create a more detailed power point presentation with more specific findings, examples and resources from our research to present at an Auxiliary Board meeting with Volunteer Services later this semester. We will supplement this with a written report and individual offers to assist both entities in the future should they choose to try some of our recommendations.

Other lessons learned

- We needed to be flexible (and were!) in project expectations and direction, and in group member participation.
 - We quickly realized that we could not simply evaluate the Auxiliary without also examining Volunteer Services. The project had to exceed Auxiliary Board boundaries to be effective.
 - We also realized that we were each extraordinarily busy and though we were not able to make every meeting, we did what we could to fill in for each other as necessary.
- We were all very compatible, comfortable and candid with each other.
- That being said, we were reminded of the importance of tact.
- We were also reminded of the value of perspective and looking at larger pictures, particularly from Mr. Duval (was WONDERFUL!) who emphasized, among other things, that particular group traits can be assets where we saw them as possible obstacles.
- Thanks to Mr. Duval, we have also started thinking of how we can use our experiences in GEHLI in the future. We will all be
 - exploring ways to ensure "knowledge transfer" from GEHLI into our offices;
 - watching for "navigational aids"--verbal and nonverbal cues during work and play interactions to lead us to our next move;
 - factoring in the "cost of transaction"--is what you are seeking worth the cost of the interruption?
 - taking our new interpersonal resources to the "next level," continuing to learn from each other through social networking and maintaining contacts even after GEHLI ends.

TEAM VISION



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Nicole Dailey
Ingrid Mercer
Kelli Parmley
Michelle Peace
Jennifer Thompson



THE
GRACE E. HARRIS
LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE



The background of the slide is a high-quality image of the USS Enterprise-D from the television series Star Trek: The Next Generation. The ship is shown from a low-angle perspective, appearing to fly towards the viewer. It is set against a deep black space filled with numerous small, bright stars. A large, curved, light-colored celestial body, possibly a planet or moon, is visible in the upper right corner, partially obscured by the ship's structure. The ship's design is highly detailed, showing the saucer section, the secondary hull, and the nacelles. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent yellow rectangular box in the lower half of the image.

**Cultivating Hospital
Volunteers and Auxiliary
Board Leadership:
The Next Generation**



Project Description

VCUHS Hospital Auxiliary Board approached GEHLI for assistance in recruiting more volunteers

Team Vision proposed a project that would examine volunteer recruitment, training and placement, and retention.

Auxiliary Board

- ❑ Financially independent entity run by volunteers
- ❑ Fundraising to benefit staff, hospitals, and patients
- ❑ Distributes money through grants
- ❑ Hospital Volunteers become members of the Auxiliary



Volunteer Services



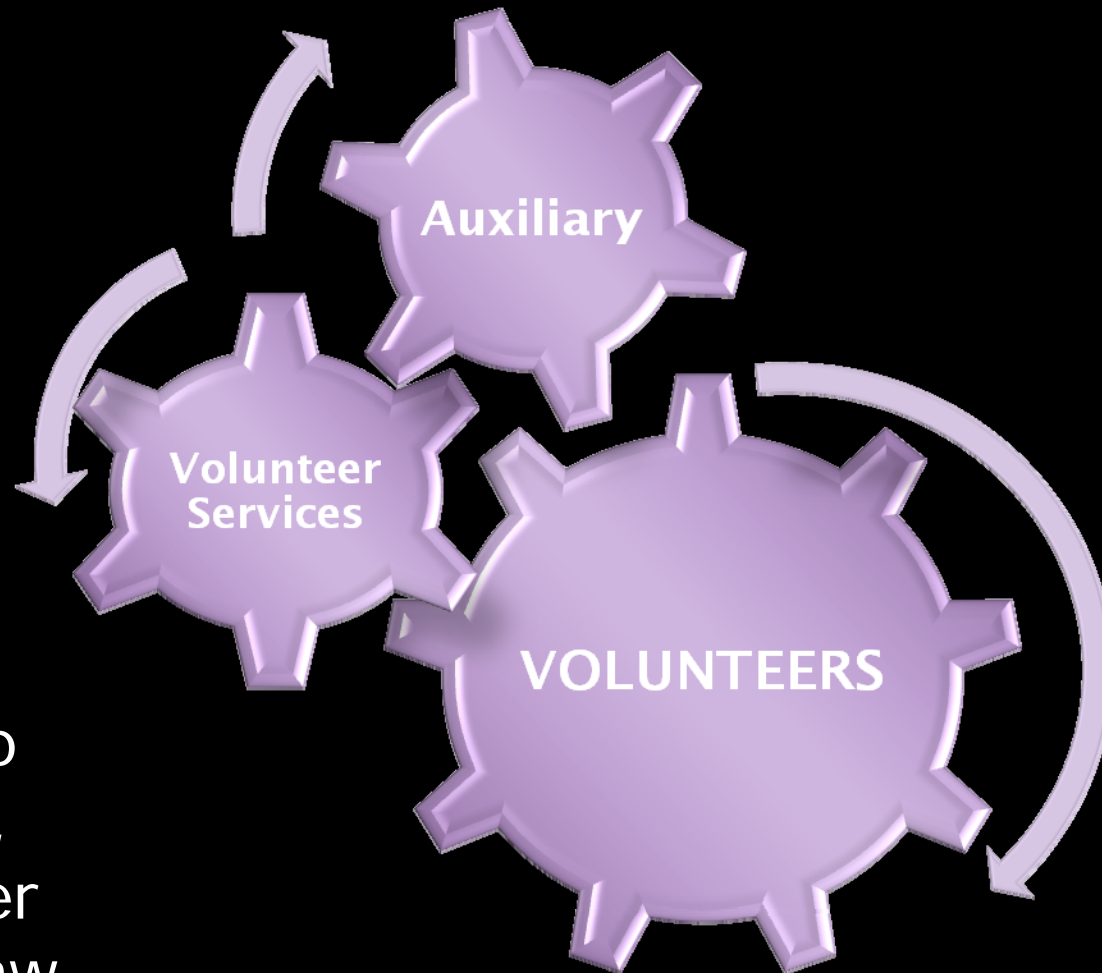
- ❑ Administrative department
- ❑ Reports to hospital advancement
- ❑ Staffs & trains all volunteer positions



Project Goals

□What are other academic medical campuses doing to sustain a robust volunteer pool?

□What can we recommend to the Auxiliary, in partnership with Volunteer Services, to enhance the volunteer pool and potentially draw from for Board leadership?



Project Structure

Three Phase Project:

I. Research

II. Analysis and Conclusions

III. Recommendations



Phase I: Research

- ❑ Met with Auxiliary and Volunteer Services to understand the current practices and interactions of the two groups
- ❑ Interviewed auxiliary and volunteer service units at peer institutions similar to VCUHS in size, location, and undergraduate population
- ❑ Interview questions focused on structure, organization, recruitment, orientation & training, placement & retention.



Phase I: Research

KALEIDA HEALTH
For your very best health

UPMC *Minute*

VCU Medical Center
Every Day, A New Discovery.

University of Cincinnati
Academic Health Center

INTERVIEWS

VCUHS Auxiliary
VCUHS Volunteer Services
University of Buffalo
University of Cincinnati
University of Michigan
University of Pittsburgh
Ohio State University



Phase I: Research

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Structure

- Organization

Recruitment

- Opportunities
- Target Audience
- Application

Orientation

- Placement
- Training

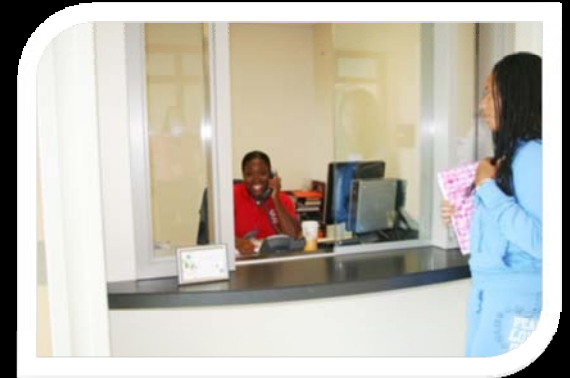
Retention

- Challenges



Phase II: Analysis & Conclusions

STRUCTURE & ORGANIZATION



- ❑ Auxiliaries & Volunteer Offices are common structures were present at each hospital we interviewed
- ❑ Variation in how they collaborated
- ❑ Respective roles and responsibilities evolved with time and through planning and communication



Phase II: Analysis & Conclusions

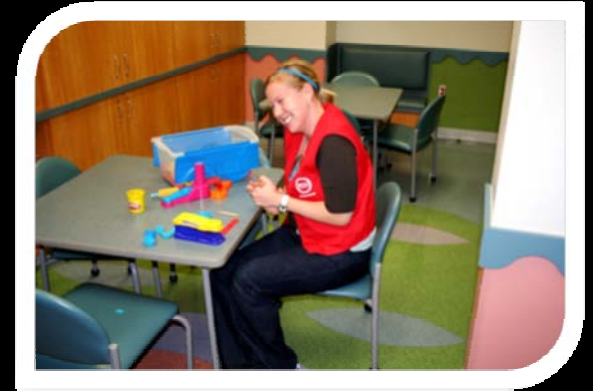
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- ❑ Summer teen program for high school students include: escort service, volunteers in waiting rooms, and filing positions.
- ❑ Friendly visitor volunteer talks to sick or elderly; described as a position that “takes a special touch”



Phase II: Analysis & Conclusions

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



- ❑ Gift shops, outpatient clinics, meeter/greeters and information providers
- ❑ Waiting areas, patient transport, primary care units
- ❑ Most requested areas: ER, patient recovery rooms, trauma burn units,
- ❑ Older volunteers prefer pediatrics, the gift shops, cancer center, and ambassador carts



Phase II: Analysis & Conclusions

APPLICATION & PLACEMENT

- ❑ On-line ease and accessibility varied among hospitals
- ❑ Volunteer placement determined by interview and application
- ❑ Seniority
- ❑ Detailed Volunteer descriptions—with expectations, skills



Phase II: Analysis & Conclusions

ORIENTATION & TRAINING



- ❑ Most offered multiple and varied of times and locations—to accommodate different populations
 - Weekend sessions VERY popular. Individual sessions offered on an as needed basis.
 - College orientations held on Sundays b/c there are no classes. Adult orientations held during the weekday evenings from 6PM-8PM.
- ❑ Volunteer services typically conducts orientations



Phase II: Analysis & Conclusions

RETENTION



- ❑ The hospitals interviewed had all faced retention issues and seemed to have addressed them:
 - College volunteers stay for the duration of their four year program
 - Community volunteers generally stay for a “very long time”.



Phase II: Analysis & Conclusions

TARGETED RECRUITMENT



- ❑ University events and job fairs are used to directly reach undergraduate volunteers leading to more than enough recruits
- ❑ One university advertised in a newspaper on a monthly basis



Phase II: Analysis & Conclusions

TARGETED RECRUITMENT



- ☐ Make presentations in front of groups to ask for volunteers,
- ☐ Utilize volunteer fairs
- ☐ Word-of-mouth advertising among college kids works well



Phase II: Analysis & Conclusions

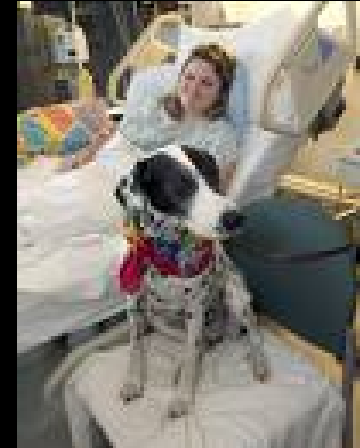
TARGETED RECRUITMENT

- ☐ Teens good for performing less desirable jobs like filing.
- ☐ One needed international relations volunteers.
- ☐ Some volunteers are "on call" when needed.
- ☐ Music Therapy program cut so volunteers with musical talents were sought in college and high school aged population.



Phase II: Analysis & Conclusions

TARGETED RECRUITMENT



- ❑ Pre-medical and health students are motivated to get patient and hospital setting experience and references
- ❑ One hospital now has college students on their auxiliary board as a result of creative recruitment



Phase III: Analysis & Conclusions

EXAMPLE

Volunteer activity in one hospital was declining, so:

- ❑ They set a goal for 20 volunteers a month.
- ❑ First they went to nursing homes, church associations, retirement facilities and found those facilities wanted to know “what’s in it for us”.
- ❑ They changed their strategy and went to the university for student recruits.
- ❑ Now require a 1-year commitment for 4 hours per week.
- ❑ Volunteers become automatic auxiliary members and Board grew from 6 to 15.
- ❑ They allow students on the board; the youngest board member is 19.

Phase III- Recommendations

Setting a Course for “The Next Generation”



Phase III- Recommendations

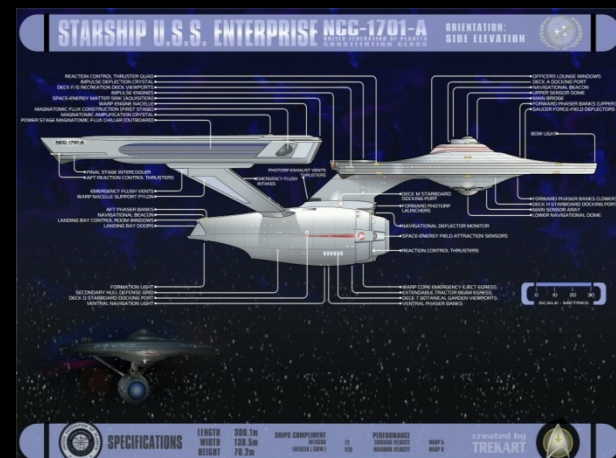
- ❑ The Auxiliary Board needs to engage in developing a vision for its future composition and leadership – consider using expertise from other volunteer entities and outside facilitation.
- ❑ Establish a “Membership Committee” to include VCUHS Volunteer Services that can clarify recruiting priorities and “gray” areas related to roles and responsibilities, and identify some short and long term actions.



Phase III- Recommendations

BOARD LEADERSHIP for the FUTURE

- ❑ What should the Board “look like” in the future?
 - ❑ What would it mean to have a college student as a member?
- ❑ Are there important demographic trends to consider?
- ❑ How to maintain fidelity to the traditions and culture of the Board and yet infuse it with a “next generation?”



Phase III- Recommendations

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE POSSIBILITIES

- ☐ Develop more detailed expectations and skills AND staffing needs (e.g. high need shift times) for each position – start with the ones “in need” (e.g., Gift Shop/Arthur Ash Reading Room/CHEC)
- ☐ “Test” a few recruitment activities for those with high needs – tap into the Monroe Park campus
- ☐ Administer a survey to current volunteers to better understand their needs with respect to recognition, etc.



Phase III- Recommendations

- ❑ Discuss, define, and come to agreement about what constitutes an “active volunteer”
- ❑ Incorporate into Database and define some regular reporting needs for the board (to assess breadth and depth of the volunteer pool)
- ❑ Affirm/confirm the role of volunteer services in placing all volunteers



Phase III: Recommendations

TAPPING VCU RESOURCES -- example

With specific volunteer needs and expectations, there are a number of venues for recruiting students at VCU.

- ❑ Reserve table at Annual Health Care Experiences Expo sponsored by VCU University College (find many pre-health students needing opportunities for recommendation letters to medical school).
- ❑ Promote possibilities directly with pre-health advisors and clubs—leaving materials in advising offices.
- ❑ Present to UNIV 101 classes specific to pre-health students.



Phase III- Recommendations

Presenting Recommendations



Final Presentation

- ❑ Shared preliminary findings and recommendations with the Auxiliary Board
- ❑ Developing a more detailed summary document
- ❑ Team Vision will formally propose strategies and recommendations to the Board



What Did We Learn?



What Did We Learn?

❑ FLEXIBILITY IS IMPORTANT

- Auxiliary as “customer” actually came with another “customer” – volunteer services
- Each group member was extraordinarily busy and we did our best to fill in for each other as we could.

❑ WE LIKE EACH OTHER

- We were all very compatible, comfortable and candid with each other.
- That said, we were reminded of the importance of tact.



What Did We Learn?

❑ Special thanks to John Duval:

- reminded us to look at the big picture (perceived obstacles can actually be assets).
- Nice coincidence that our project involved Volunteer Services and Auxiliary Board --



What Did We Learn?

□ How can we use our GEHLI experience in the future?

- ✓ Explore ways to ensure “knowledge transfer” from GEHLI to our offices.
- ✓ Identify important “navigational aids” to lead us to our next move and share those with others.
- ✓ Consider the “cost of transaction”
- ✓ Take OUR new interpersonal resources to the “next level” by networking



