

City of Bloomington Volunteer Network

2011 Annual Report

Valuing Volunteers in Bloomington



Letter from the Staff



“Bloomington is an amazing and unusual community. There are more volunteers than in most communities. I think people feel that they can really make a difference here.”

- Sandy Keller, My Sister's Closet



Bloomington is different. You can sense it almost immediately. Of course there is Indiana University, the beautiful restored courthouse and downtown square, and the recreational haven of Lake Monroe. These all set Bloomington apart from other places in the state, or even the region, as a place to be. But it is something more that truly makes Bloomington different. It's people. The spirit of giving is strong here, and as a result the spirit of community is strong.

Bloomington is a place where every individual has the opportunity, and the invitation, to find his or her passion as a volunteer.

In the Fall of 2011, the Volunteer Network took a closer look at our more than 200 member organizations to learn what our local nonprofits are experiencing in terms of community volunteer support. We wanted to know which agencies utilized volunteers the most, how much people volunteer, and the demographics of those volunteers. We also wanted to explore the impact of college student volunteers and service-learners on the community. We know they're important, but how important? And we wanted to be able to put a value on volunteerism – what is its economic and community impact?

After an initial survey of our members, we worked with a team of Indiana University service-learners from Dr. Beth Gazley's 'Survey Course in Nonprofit Management'. The students, Tegan McQuaid, Whitney Switzer and Hayley Trezzo, followed up with organizations to either encourage their completion of the survey or to verify unclear submissions. They then analyzed the data, interviewed four volunteer resource managers to add context to the numbers, and assisted with production of this report.

The goal of this survey, and the work of the City of Bloomington Volunteer Network, is to support and recognize the value of volunteers, along with the professional community of nonprofit staff, who give their all every day – putting into action that caring and giving spirit that makes Bloomington the place to be.

In Partnership,
Bet Savich and Lucy Schaich



Bloomington Snapshot Report

The 2011 City of Bloomington Volunteer Network Report presents the findings of an online survey of the Volunteer Network's 235 member organizations. With 81 organizations reporting, this survey captured the total numbers of volunteers, volunteer hours, volunteer value to the organization and volunteer program staffing. In addition, data collected from the Volunteer Network's online recruitment system (Volunteer Solutions) was also utilized. The survey was completed between 10/1/11 and 11/30/11. Data collected from Volunteer Solutions is for the 2011 calendar year.

Who is volunteering?

Everyone at every age and every stage! From families volunteering with their young children to college students to retirees, our member organizations reported that service knows no age.

Go IU!

- 83% consider IU volunteers as essential, very important or important to their operational success
- 63% work with IU service-learning students

Get an early Start!

- 83% of member organizations reported having families with children and teens in their volunteer programs

Who me, retire?!

- 94% of member organizations reported enlisting people over the age of 55 in their programs

Let's work together!

- 41% work with Service Clubs
- 35% work with Mandatory Service
- 33% work with Corporate Volunteers
- 27% work with People with Disabilities
- 15% work with Workforce Re-entry Volunteers

There is room for improvement: 36% do not actively work with any of the preceding groups.



What is the economic impact?

81 member organizations reported
(36% response rate):

Total volunteers.....24,264
Total volunteer hours437,885
Volunteer value*\$7,711,154.85

*To determine the value of volunteers in the city of Bloomington, the Bloomington Volunteer Network used the Independent Sector method to assign a monetary value to the number of hours reported. In the Independent Sector method, the value of volunteer time is based on the average hourly earnings of all production and nonsupervisory workers on private non-farm payrolls, as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Independent Sector takes this figure and increases it by 12 percent to estimate for fringe benefits. In determining the value of volunteer time, the Indiana average hourly wage of \$17.61 was multiplied by the total number of volunteer hours.



State of the Profession

It is a primary goal of the Volunteer Network to support the professionalization of the volunteer resource manager position. It is clear from the survey responses that volunteers are a vital part of a nonprofit's success. In fact, 94% of organizations reported that volunteers were important, very important or essential to their operations. This is in comparison to the 19% of reporting organizations that said they employ a paid, full-time volunteer resource manager. That's a very wide gap between what exists and what is needed!

For the past three years, in order to support both paid and unpaid volunteer resource managers, the Volunteer Network has hosted the Volunteer VIP professional group. This topic-focused discussion and networking group for volunteer program staff meets on a bi-monthly basis to learn, share and discuss best practices of volunteer resource management.



Whose job is it? Who is managing the volunteer resources in our nonprofits — paid staff or volunteers?

- 19% **PAID** full-time volunteer resource manager
- 17% **PAID** part-time volunteer resource manager
- 32% **PAID** staff manage volunteers on an as-needed or project-by-project basis
- 2% **VOLUNTEER** full-time volunteer resource manager
- 10% **VOLUNTEER** part-time volunteer resource manager
- 20% **VOLUNTEERS** manage volunteers on an as-needed or project-by-project basis



How does Bloomington Compare?

At the City of Bloomington Volunteer Network, we have been asked that question many times! The Corporation for National and Community Service's Volunteering in America Report 2010 (www.volunteeringinamerica.gov) tells us that in Indiana, about 28% of Hoosiers volunteer an average of 40 hours per year, and that in Bloomington, 34% of people volunteer. We knew our community was above average, and now we can prove it! The study goes on to list some of the factors that influence volunteer rates. For example, volunteer rates are higher in cities with:

- higher educational levels
- shorter commute times
- a robust nonprofit infrastructure
- higher levels of community attachment (measured by such things as home ownership)
- lower foreclosure rates



28% of Hoosiers volunteer

34% of people in Bloomington volunteer



So, how does Bloomington compare?

Very nicely, thank you. We can be proud of our level of involvement and the great love our citizens have for our city. We can be grateful for the vast talent pool of students, staff and faculty from Indiana University and Ivy Tech Community College, as Bloomington is considerably enriched by their commitment to service.



Volunteer Network Year in Review

We organized volunteer fairs:

- Bloomington High School South
- Edgewood High School
- Volunteer Fair at the Farmers Market

We hosted volunteer VIP gatherings:

- Mandatory Service FAQs Answered
- Creating a Culture of Extraordinary Customer Service
- Successful Group Projects and Project Leaders
- Creative Conflict Resolution for Volunteer Managers
- Targeted Communication Strategies for Recruitment
- Building an Inclusive Volunteer Program

We honored volunteers:

- Be More Awards
- President's Volunteer Service Awards

We took the show on the road with outreach to a variety of:

- Businesses
- Faith communities
- Service clubs
- IU and Ivy Tech student groups
- National service programs
- Youth groups

We honored Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with a day of service



We launched:

- A new member benefit: discounted background checks
- A new volunteer training program: Nonprofit Board Certificate Program

We participated in initiatives at IU:

- Campus/Community Volunteer Speedmatching event
- Volunteer Leader Training
- Serve IT nonprofit clinic

We also ...

- Attended the National Conference on Volunteering and Service, New Orleans, LA
- Offered "The Essentials" Volunteer Management Training
- Published the Holiday Wish List
- Mobilized volunteers to do tornado debris clean-up this spring
- Are part of Monroe County's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.



Looking to the **Future**

The Volunteer Network's primary role is to empower people to make a meaningful difference in their community. We provide access to tools, resources and opportunities, and mobilize volunteers to address community issues and build on community assets. We agree with Bloom Magazine, which lists 'We are a community that cares' as one of the 50 reasons to love Bloomington. [5th Anniversary Issue; Aug./Sept. 2011] But that doesn't mean our work is done. Volunteer resource managers are stretched thin. They don't have enough committed volunteers to keep going. They're taking it one day at a time, working hard and doing their best. We can do better, but how? What will it take?

Help us set priorities: We want to hear from you!

The Volunteer Network works to support our nonprofit member organizations in their work with volunteers. Tell us where our assistance, resources and support could be best utilized for your organization. Your ideas are welcome. Visit our Virtual Suggestion Box at

<http://bit.ly/VirtualSuggestionBox>



Community Partners: We couldn't do it without you!

The Volunteer Network is supported in its work each and every day by our terrific media partners, The Herald-Times, WGCL, WFHB, Spirit 95, WTIU, CATS and others. Our initiatives and programs are strengthened by our solid partnerships with a great



number of organizations, only a few of which are listed here: Chamber of Commerce, Leadership Bloomington Alumni Association, NonProfit Alliance of Monroe County, Sherwood Oaks Christian Church, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Celebration Commission, Center for Civic Engagement at Ivy Tech, IU Civic Engagement Stakeholders, IU Serve IT Program, and the IU Service Learning Program.

The Be More Awards wouldn't be the special, gala event that it is without its enthusiastic sponsorship by the Community Foundation of Bloomington and Monroe County, IU Credit Union, United Way of Monroe County and WTIU.

We also benefit greatly from the resources provided by our national partners, the Corporation for National and Community Service and the HandsOn Network. Each of our 235 member organizations are our partners as well, as are all of the community volunteers. Thank you for being a part of the City of Bloomington Volunteer Network!



More About

The City of Bloomington

Volunteer Network

The Volunteer Network is a program of City government, in existence since 1980, which mobilizes volunteers to address community issues and build on community assets. We seek to build a strong, healthy and engaged community by connecting volunteers of all ages with opportunities to serve and by providing resources to volunteers and agencies to build creative and effective volunteer projects, programs and partnerships.

We value people. The diverse talents, perspectives, and contributions that each person brings to our community creates an environment where all lives are enriched. We value involvement. Volunteering and civic engagement provide opportunities for personal growth through sharing skills, interests and talents. And we value community. Collaboration and cooperation between individuals and organizations are the basis for a stronger and more productive community. In short, we believe in the power of community involvement - volunteerism - to change the world!

The Volunteer Network has five core functions:

- Connect individuals and groups to volunteer opportunities in Bloomington and Monroe County
- Build the capacity for effective volunteering through nonprofit support, resources and professional training opportunities
- Promote and celebrate volunteerism
- Participate in strategic partnerships and initiatives to mobilize volunteers to strengthen our community
- Match the material needs of local nonprofit organizations with community members and businesses who can meet those needs.



Programs and Resources for Volunteers:

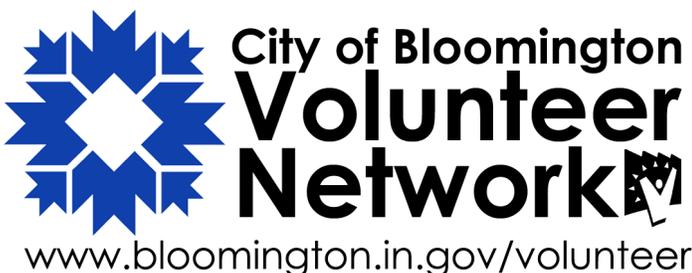
- Online searchable database of volunteer opportunities
- VolunteerBloomington! e-newsletter (weekly)
- Volunteer Guide (print)
- Community Wish List (print and online)
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service
- Be More Awards
- Farmers' Market Volunteer Fair
- Nonprofit Board Certificate Program

Programs & Resources for Volunteer Managers:

- Volunteer Management Training (The Essentials)
- Networking Opportunities (Volunteer VIPs)
- Consultation Services
- Online resources
- E-newsletter for Volunteer Managers (Volunteer Network Newsflash)
- Community Outreach on behalf of all member organizations

Visit us online at www.bloomington.in.gov/volunteer.

You can reach Bloomington Volunteer Network Director Bet Savich at 812-349-3472 or savichb@bloomington.in.gov or volunteer@bloomington.in.gov. Assistant Director Lucy Schaich can be reached at schaichl@bloomington.in.gov or 812-349-3433.



Case Study:

People and Animals Learning Service (PALS)

Volunteers: 250

Volunteer Hours: 1500

People and Animal Learning Services, Inc. — PALS — is a nonprofit organization that offers therapeutic horseback riding to individuals with special needs. They are supported by an average of 150 volunteers each week, with the assistance and guidance of the organization's four paid staff members. Taryn Lyman, the Volunteer Coordinator, has found that people often begin volunteering because they have an interest in working with people with disabilities or they have a love of horses, but they continue volunteering because they develop bonds with the riders and enjoy seeing their progress. Taryn also explained that if an individual volunteers for at least two sessions they are highly likely to stay with the organization for an extended period of time.

A Family Organization

People working with PALS have found the volunteers and staff become a family through their work. All the horses are donated. When a horse needs to retire from the program for whatever reason, PALS does its best to keep the horses within the PALS family too! Omaha, a chestnut paint, was recently retired and then adopted by a current volunteer, who had been with PALS for about three months. Taryn said she was very happy to see Omaha go to a new home where he could happily retire, but still stay within the PALS family!



Volunteer Demographics

The majority of their volunteers are in the college student age range – 18 to 24. They now set their minimum age for volunteering at 16. Taryn said it is not uncommon for her to be contacted by younger teens who are so eager to volunteer with PALS they feel they just cannot wait until they are old enough. PALS' oldest volunteer is 74 and has been with the organization for many years.

Volunteer Recruitment and Training

To become a PALS volunteer, individuals participate in a three-hour training session. PALS' self-proclaimed biggest source of volunteers is through the City of Bloomington Volunteer Network. They also recruit new volunteers through mailing campaigns, volunteer fairs at Indiana University, City Hall and Ivy Tech and by word of mouth.



Case Study:

WonderLab Museum of Science, Health and Technology

Volunteers: 968

Volunteer Hours: 18,411

WonderLab Museum, a vibrant community organization, provides opportunities for people of all ages, especially children, to experience the wonder and excitement of science through hands-on exhibits and programs that stimulate curiosity, encourage exploration, and foster lifelong learning.

Volunteer Demographics

WonderLab is unusual in that their volunteers represent all ages – 45% of their volunteers are college students, 17% are high school students, 30% are community adults, and 8% are middle school students. College students also contribute the most time – 37% of total volunteer hours – right above high school students at 31%.

Volunteer Training, Recruitment and Retention

Outside of the City of Bloomington Volunteer Network, WonderLab recruits at IU involvement fairs, through IU advisors and service-learning classes and at local middle and high schools. WonderLab builds on its 1½ hour orientation with required on-the-job training and shadowing for volunteers. Everyone starts out as a “Discovery Coach” and can move on to other volunteer roles, such as exhibit or membership positions.

WonderLab has an excellent, professional program for volunteer management and retention, with two part-time staff positions - Volunteer Coordinator and Volunteer Director. Both are essential to its youth-development mission. They use a dedicated volunteer database program – Vol-gistics – to track volunteers and their hours, and regularly offer the President’s Volun-



teer Service Awards to qualifying volunteers. WonderLab volunteers receive recognition and rewards when they reach hourly or service milestones, as well as a free admission, free access to events, and an annual thank you party. They also recommend outstanding volunteers to scholarship and award programs, and provide them with letters of recommendation. WonderLab’s ‘Teen Nights’ provide teen volunteers and their friends with a safe place to have fun and hang out.

Valuing Volunteers

Jeanne Gunning, the Volunteer Director at WonderLab, says their volunteers have a very positive and enthusiastic attitude and like what they do. WonderLab has a high volunteer retention rate, among both IU students and those who live in the community year-round. The impact that WonderLab’s volunteers make is always included in their annual report, although they prefer not to put a dollar sign on it, as they believe the volunteers’ contribution goes beyond its monetary value. She believes that the prevalence of volunteerism in Bloomington makes it one of the best places to live in the U.S. She added “if you need help with something, someone in this community will reach out to you and provide it.”



www.bloomington.in.gov/volunteer

Case Study:

City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation

Volunteers: 1,789

Volunteer Hours: 10,365

The City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department offers a variety of volunteer positions providing opportunities to make friends, earn service learning credits, gain valuable experience, and have fun. Volunteering with City Parks and Recreation is a great way for Bloomington residents to connect to their community. Kim Ecenbarger, Special Services Coordinator, says many volunteers report that their volunteering enhances their sense of community pride and they enjoy feeling a sense of being involved with something bigger than themselves.

Becoming a Volunteer

There are many opportunities and commitment levels for volunteers, ranging from one-day events to ongoing programs such as after-school programs, to the Park Ambassador program, which carries significant responsibilities.

Volunteer Recruitment

Kim maintains regular contact with volunteers through an e-newsletter, as well as a link on the department's website which has sign-up capabilities for volunteer opportunities at upcoming events. In addition to utilizing the services of the Bloomington Volunteer Network, Parks and Recreation representatives regularly attend volunteer fairs and information sessions including the IU Student Involvement Fair and School of IU Health, Physical Education, and Recreation volunteer information session.



Valuing Volunteers

Every month, a volunteer is honored with the BRAVO Award that is presented at the Bloomington Board of Park Commissioners meeting. The award recognizes the outstanding contributions of departmental volunteers. In addition, Kim includes the economic value of their volunteers in the department's annual report to publicly show the impact they have on the organization and the monetary value of their donations of time.



Case Study:

My Sister's Closet of Monroe County

Volunteers: 134

Volunteer Hours: 1784

My Sister's Closet provides at-risk, low-income women pursuing employment with free workforce attire through the use of a voucher system used by 46 agencies. Women are provided with five professional outfits to aid in their interview process, and ultimately in obtaining a job. With the assistance of 134 volunteers, 158 low-income women have benefitted from the program. Many also benefit from the free interview skills training which My Sister's Closet offers. They rely on donations of professional attire and also sell gently used, affordable, quality clothes to the public.

Volunteer Recruitment and Training

Outside of the Bloomington Volunteer Network, My Sister's Closet recruits volunteers from IU through service-learning classes and groups such as Kelley School of Business Net Impact and Kelley Women, IU Volunteer Fairs, and presentations to philanthropic clubs and church groups. Store volunteers are trained by My Sister's Closet's only employees, a part-time client services coordinator and a part-time pricing/branding specialist. Other volunteers are trained by members of My Sister's Closet Executive and Student boards.

Volunteer Demographics

My Sister's Closet utilizes both community members and college students from 16 to 80 years old. These volunteers lend their talents and energies to projects ranging from staffing the Bargain Boutique to Web and Social Media Management, Grant Writing, Event Planning, Success Institute Training, and Volunteer Management.



Volunteers also serve in leadership positions on both Boards.

Valuing Volunteers

The impact of My Sister's Closet volunteers is included in every grant proposal which they submit, as well as in their outreach and promotional materials. Executive Director Sandy Keller, who is also the founder of the program, believes that volunteers, like herself, are drawn to My Sister's Closet because they want to see real change happen within the community. They can see the tangible effects on those who go through Interview Skills Training and with every voucher recipient who goes in the store. Volunteers say they see an incredible increase in the confidence of a woman from the moment she enters the store, to the moment she leaves with her new outfits, and in a way, her new persona. Yet, Sandy explains that it is not only the clothes that change a woman's attitude, it is the empowering praise of the volunteers in the store. Sandy believes "Bloomington is an amazing and unusual community. We are blessed with many volunteers. People feel that they can really make a difference here."



www.bloomington.in.gov/volunteer