

INSPIRING INVOLVEMENT

Notes for address to Age Advantage Forum, 9&10 October 2003

by Katherine Peet, Chairperson, Volunteering Canterbury



Title, Pathways poster and Volunteering Vision picture (in everyone's file) on board and show overhead of Conference on the Birds.

Begin by noting that volunteering is one of the pathways people are on - others being employment etc. Also honour all the people involved in supporting volunteering, especially Volunteer Coordinators in agencies. Note that Volunteering Canterbury currently has 220 members agencies.

First - IT IS INSPIRING ! - some key words - commitment, energy, skill, creativity, enthusiasm, vitality. The Statistics Department's Time Use Study recorded 247 million hours per year in voluntary work in organisations. If the hourly rate is \$10 per hour (which undervalues most contributions) this would represent \$2.47 billion.

Volunteering Canterbury is fortunate to have its role welcomed by many Maori and is developing links with people from Pacific Island nations. A high percentage of people who

come in to the Centre are from ethnic minorities.

Our experience (and we have referred over 12,000 volunteers since our inception) is that Third Agers are vital to this involvement even though we are convinced of the value of working across the generations.

Second - INSPIRE ! - Voluntary Work cannot replace income but can replace other things lost when people give up or change their paid work. While our approach is intergenerational we know older people can feel useless and undervalued, miss the companionship of colleagues, the structure to their day and the challenges inherent in paid work. Voluntary work can be as satisfying as paid work - if not more so. Advantages are flexibility and the fact that it is voluntary - workplace bullying stops, health issues can be worked around, the voice of the worker is paramount. Skills and knowledge are expanded and new people are met.



Third - DEFINE - Voluntary work is not the same thing as unpaid work - after all, slavery is unpaid work!

Show the difference by comparing a map of the world with a globe of the world and refer to how hard it is to identify the missing dimension. Thanks to Memorandum of Understanding signatories including CDC, CECC, DWI for their help in this.

Show overhead of Smoking Creates Jobs class=Section2>

The intrinsic worth of volunteering is celebrated by



acknowledging that it is alongside but independent of paid work.

Voluntary work is

done of one's own

free will, unpaid, for the common good.

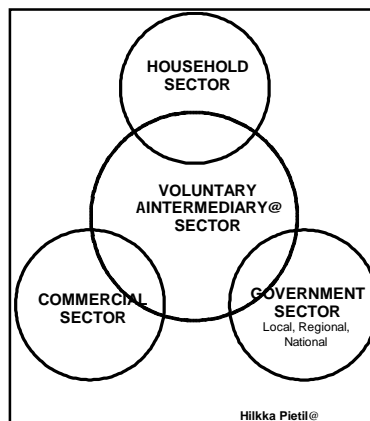
Aroha ki te Takata a Rohe

Show overhead of Just Because You're Outnumbered Doesn't Mean You're Wrong

We are pleased to have been invited by the Third Age Centre to facilitate the Volunteering Focus Group and we look forward to collaboration with you all to promote best practice. It is an art form! So much of what is contributed is not formalised. Some existing resources are:

- * Nominations to our two Awards ceremonies - International Volunteer Day on December 5 where we focus on Youth, and Volunteer Awareness Week in March.
- * Participation in our Employee Volunteering Programme with its 11 options - this encourages people to learn how to juggle paid work and volunteering
- * Pamphlets on the Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers and on the role of Agencies involving Volunteers (in your files)
- * Policies on all aspects of Supporting Voluntary Work which is cost effective but not free! Reimbursement of expenses, an understanding of Koha, provision of low cost, appropriate, quality training opportunities for all those in the field, treating volunteers with the same respect that paid workers receive are some of the matters addressed in these.

Six sectors are profiled - Arts and Heritage, Education and Information, Emergency Services, Environment, Health and Social Services and Sport. Roles taken vary widely - mentoring (Third Agers have a huge contribution to make here), guides, gardeners, decision making, fundraising, organisers, companions, tutors etc.



Lastly - RECOGNITION - Show overhead of Intermediary role of volunteering. Commitment to gift something back to society leads to interface with Commerce, Government (central, local and regional) and Personal /household and with whanau / hapu / iwi.

This morning Ted Gallin noted that to capture opportunities you need organisation!

Anywhere in the country you can contact through the Volunteering New Zealand Freephone 0800 865 268

Volunteering Canterbury's website (which has links to the Third Age Centre's) is www.volcan..org.nz

And our Centre is situated in Christchurch Community House Te Whakaruruhau ki Otautahi, 151 Hereford St, Phone 3662442 , Fax 3660117

We want to involve Third Agers to offer their wisdom and experience in volunteering alongside their other involvements, to make all this inspiring volunteering more visible and to inspire more of it!

FOCUS GROUPS ON VOLUNTEERING

Hanna Hessels, Ron Holdaway, Margaret McArthur and Katherine Peet

After hearing from each person about their interest in this focus group discussion identified two Projects to work with the mature aged. These involve advocacy in the “first” and “second” age as well as “third” age.

1. PROMOTION

- * distribute Volunteering Canterbury resources more widely
ACTION - obtain financial resources - from Third Age Centre/CDC?
- * gain opportunities to brief paid workers about the differences between unpaid work and voluntary work. This should include briefing Wellington-based as well as local policy makers. In particular it is necessary to promote the advice that counting the hours of voluntary work and reflecting these in dollar terms is useful in demonstrating the scale of contribution made by voluntary work. Voluntary Work cannot however be valued in dollars terms alone.
ACTION - liaise with Third Age Centre for opportunities
- * clarify difficulties of previous census questions in getting hard data about voluntary work and approach the Statistics Department to ensure new questions into next census
ACTION - inform Third Age Centre of work already done by Volunteering Canterbury on proposed new questions and follow up collaboratively with them in an approach to the Statistics Department

2. INCOME MAINTENANCE - ISSUES WITH DWI AND IRD

Voluntary work needs to be recognised by DWI and IRD as a contribution to the well being of society alongside but independent of paid work.

- * Reimbursement of expenses associated with the voluntary work should not be regarded as wages.
- * OSH considerations of Voluntary work need further attention.
- * Case Managers should consider the beneficiary’s voluntary work as an addition to any programme of transition to paid work and exclude voluntary work from the work plan only with the beneficiaries approval.
ACTION - Third Age Centre and Volunteering Canterbury liaise with DWI and the Employment Focus Group to establish a channel of communication where these and any other associated matters can be addressed.