**Library Volunteer Leaders - Notes**

**4-21-21 1:30 EST**

**Host: Wendy Johnson, Indianapolis Public Library**

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Hello, Friends –

This week we had a chance to dive into volunteer exit interviews and evaluations. Do we do them? What are some of the pros & cons? This conversation was initiated by a volunteer program assessment tool I helped to create while working for the Volunteer Center inside the United Way of Central Indiana. It will be included with the email with these notes.

Next week we’re going to start an in-depth discussion about volunteer handbook content. There’s too much to cover in an hour, so we’ll start at the top of the list (see the assessment tool) and work our way down.

Please, take care!

Wendy J

Meetings will be held every Wednesday at 1:30 EST for an hour until further notice. We’ll use the same Zoom link each week. Please share the link with fellow library volunteer leaders…**the more smart people the better**.

Zoom:  <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85199850785?pwd=WHorb3h2ckgvZjhZT1BOVWxEMzhlZz09>

Access Code: Volunteer

**Topics Discussed**

**CVA Test update – Tammy Steffen is our newest CVA! Congratulations!**

**Independent Sector – New value of volunteer time, $28.54, up 4.9%**

Here’s the press release: <https://independentsector.org/news-post/independent-sector-releases-new-value-of-volunteer-time-of-28-54-per-hour/> which contains links to more data, including individual state values.

**Exit Interviews for Volunteers**

* Send a questioner with a return envelope – anonymous
* Only to volunteers who have been on-going (have some number of hours)
* This would help us to understand why they are leaving
* Want to implement an on-line exit survey
* Volunteers may be more open and frank when they are leaving than when they are engaged
* Call when timesheets stop coming in – to gauge what’s going on – school/job/family commitments or something else
* Track why volunteers leave in database
* Staff have an exit checklist – turn in badge kinds of things – should we have this for volunteers?
* If you have/don’t have an exit interview for staff should you mirror this for volunteers?
* On-line survey, watch for trends to course correct; pass along staff feedback
* I haven't done either [exit interview or evaluation] in the past, but I'm considering implementing an online check-in a week in (application process review), month in (how's volunteering working), 6 month (still okay?), yearly after that and then an exit interview. Is that too much?

**Volunteer Evaluations**

* We’re split on whether we should do volunteer evaluations…like the once a year kind done for staff. Mostly, we don’t.
* Value in meeting one-on-one to have a conversation
* Use Sign-up Genius to schedule ½ hr sessions to talk about anything. Much like a professors office hours.
* Would like to for continuous improvement
* Demonstrates quality of work matters; standards matter; we’re paying attention and value volunteer time
* Volunteers WANT to do it right, have an impact
* Zoom focus groups of 4-5 volunteers with a moderator
* Volunteers felt stressed out by annual evaluations…felt like this was a J O B
* Challenged staff to have a small conversation with each volunteer each month (2-3 minutes or more). This built trust and gave a chance for open dialogue of ideas and corrections
* Benefit to the volunteer coordinator/lead – they gain experience having critical conversations. Yet there’s concern of a younger coordinator and an older volunteer. Possible solution: recruit an HR professional or older volunteer to help (and mentor the volunteer coordinator).
* Volunteers are mostly from workforce (and have or had jobs) and are used to evaluations. They would be appalled to learn that they were doing a task incorrectly. There is no interest in diminishing the work being done.
* Offer training to volunteer coordinators on how to give feedback
* No volunteer wants to be “in the way” of getting work done/the mission. They want to contribute.
* Don’t let bad work go too long!

**An Abundance of Volunteer Applicants - Karen**

Do you get a much larger number of applications than you have positions available?  How is this handled equitably….first come, most qualified, recommended by current volunteer, etc.? To go along with that.  Do you answer each query or only those whose applications are accepted.  Do you keep a “wait list” for the overflow applicants?

* I always respond. It’s bad P.R. for the organization if I don’t. We are ambassadors for our organization.
* Try to respond to all, especially if the volunteer is a referral from a board member, staff, or other volunteer.
* Bumped court ordered to top of list – they are easy to place/schedule and essential to library (cleaning).
* Provide resources if no opportunities or not currently taking application – like, VolunteerMatch
* Recruit an administrative volunteer to help with the volume of applications – an HR specialist would be great!
* Indicate on webpage, “not taking applications at this time” (include other resources and a timeline for when applications will be accepted).
* Bulk interview cycle for teens – Applications are only taken in April – group interview of 4-5 at a time – all are interviewed.
* All applicants are interviewed – Signup genius for scheduling or timeframe for next interview cycle.
* Create positions for volunteers rather than try to fit them into pre-defined roles.

**Bonus**

* Volunteer feedback form/survey: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdw_IF7ErpWC9OD8vhRjKlss41s2fL-IdsV6nJd2_2tkYp4dA/viewform?usp=sf_link>

**Resources and Training Opportunities**

* Thursday, May 6 – Crafting Inclusive Volunteer Recruitment Messages –

10:00 – 11:30 am Pacific time, free

Register here: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMtcOqgrzkrHddh5b6xysm3dUy4Q6t76sVh>

* “[2021 Texas Volunteer Management Conference, Shaping the Future of Volunteerism](https://www.texasvmc.org/)”, 100% Virtual, May 13 & 14. $20 for Student/AmeriCorps, $35 General Admission.
* Thursday, June 3 – No “One Right Way:” Creating New Systems for Volunteer

Engagement -- 10 am – 11 am Pacific time, free

Register here: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2124039175063372557>

* Points of Light Conference, [Registration is open](https://events.bizzabo.com/297882?utm_medium=email&utm_content=119715489&utm_source=hs_email). July 14-16, virtual. Early bird $99 through April 30.
* Volgistics National Peer Group – on-line – 2nd Tuesday of the Month – free!

FMI contact Jessica Link, [linkj@crlibrary.org](mailto:linkj@crlibrary.org). Recordings are available after you sign a release.

* Join the GetInvolved list serve by emailing Carla, [clehn@califa.org](mailto:clehn@califa.org). Fabulous resource with samples, current news & updates.
* Leadership training: <https://www.nten.org/course/mindful-leadership-in-trying-times/> Liza says, “I've seen Meico speak at a past conference and he's great!”

**Future Topics**

* Handbook section by section
* Graceful volunteer retirement
* On-boarding “Wash-out”/self-select out – Janice has a plan
* Teen Advisories / Summer Program
* MLS programs lacking volunteer content: Rebecca (returning in June-ish)
* Circle Back for updates:
  + University of North Carolina – Charlotte (UNCC) Class Project Update – Chauna
  + Reinventing volunteer engagement in our libraries – removing barriers
  + Our leadership role, what new things are we doing? Resources to share?