Volunteerism in Local Government

Webinar for Government Educator presented by NAVPLG:
National Association of Volunteer Programs in Local Government
Today’s Objective

- Review the why’s and how’s of using volunteers in local government
About the speaker

- Leigh Britt, CVA
  - Manager of Neighborhood Services, City of Columbia, MO
  - President of NAVPLG
- What is NAVPLG?
  - www.NAVPLG.org
- Volunteer Programs in Columbia, Missouri
  - www.GoColumbiaMo.com/Volunteer
Why use volunteer in local government?

- Enhance the work of staff
- Accomplish work that would otherwise not be done
- Allow residents greater ownership in their community
- Build community!
Needs of volunteers

- Valuable service opportunities
- Gain experience and learn new skills
- Social interactions
- The opportunity to make a difference
- Appreciation
- Recognition
Examples of volunteer roles

- Greet visitors
- Library
- Enhance public safety
- Help in parks and green space
- Protect the environment
- Code Enforcement
- General administration
- Recreation
- Disaster preparedness and response
- Senior Services
- CASA – Court Appointment Special Advocates
- Mentoring
- Beautification
Considerations for starting a volunteer program

• Support from leadership
  ◦ Do you have the support of elected officials and top managers?

• What are your needs?
  ◦ What can volunteers help you accomplish?
  ◦ What are goals, projects or tasks that have not been accomplished?
Considerations for starting a volunteer program

- Vision and Mission of the volunteer program
- Structure: centralized or de-centralized?
  - Who will manage the volunteer program?
  - Will a person in each department be responsible or will you have one staff person to handle for the entire organization?
- Data tracking
  - Volunteer database
  - Access
Considerations for starting a volunteer program

- Risk management and safety
  - Screening
  - Training
  - Tools
  - Supervision
  - Safety equipment
  - Volunteer tasks
Steps to success!

1. Determine need and positions
   ◦ Position descriptions

2. Determine policies and procedures
   ◦ Put it in writing
   ◦ Consider how to handle ending service

3. Recruitment
   ◦ Website
   ◦ Who are the people who have an interest in your needs
Steps to Success

4. Screening
   ◦ Don’t make assumptions about people if screening is important for the task

5. Placement
   ◦ Put people in the position best for them

6. Training
   ◦ In person
   ◦ Online
   ◦ Video
   ◦ As part of an appreciation
   ◦ Initial training and on-going training
Steps to Success

7. Evaluation and results
   ◦ Connect a dollar value to service – www.IndependentSector.org
   ◦ Volunteers may not always see the impact they make
   ◦ Share results with leadership and the community

8. Appreciation
   ◦ Do it often and in many ways!
Budgetary Considerations

- Staff
- Administration: postage, paper, supplies, computer
- Uniforms
- Background checks
- Appreciation events
- Software for data tracking
Staff/Volunteer Relations

- Volunteers should enhance the work of paid staff
- Allow staff to “own” the volunteer management process
- Include volunteer management in performance reviews
Opportunities for partnerships

- Sponsorships for:
  - Meals
  - Uniforms
  - Promotion/advertisement
  - Volunteers!!
Group Work Days

- Tasks – is there enough work?
- Tools & Supplies
- Project Management & Supervision
- Getting there – maps, transportation and parking
Questions?