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California Department of Corrections

FIRST YEAR EVALUATION OF THE MODEL VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

BY

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Evaluation

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FIRST YEAR REPORT

TO

OFFICE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE PLANNING

Prepared by

Department of the California Youth Authority

State of California

January 1974

The Law Enforcement Assistance Administration of the Department of Justice and the Office of Criminal Justice Planning, while funding the Project, do not necessarily agree with the findings or opinions expressed in this report.

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Special Note: Copies of this First Year Evaluation can be obtained from the Model Volunteer Project office at 2222 Sierra Boulevard, Bldg. B, Suite 11, Sacramento CA 95825

INTRODUCTION

Volunteerism in correctional settings is here to stay as a major part of community based correctional programming. The increasing importance of volunteer programs can be seen by the fact that nationwide in 1959 only a handful of people in volunteer activity were involved in the area of corrections. By 1971, the number of volunteers nationwide was estimated to be nearly 200,000. Volunteers were now giving their time and effort to county jails, county camps, probation and parole departments, and state and federal correctional institutions.

Part of the reason for the new emphasis on volunteerism in corrections is due to a new and changing philosophy of correctional treatment. This new philosophy is the recognition that the community must share in the responsibility for treatment of the offender. To encourage greater community involvement, certain changes have occurred at both the state and federal levels in recent years.

The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice (1967) published various recommendations pertaining to the Administration of Criminal Justice. One of these recommendations included emphasizing greater use of volunteers and subprofessional aides in demonstration projects and regular programs.

California, in recent years, has experienced both a change in the philosophy toward volunteerism in corrections and a corresponding proliferation of volunteer programs at both the county and state levels.

From 50 to 100 correctionally oriented volunteer programs were in operation in California in 1970. By 1971 this number had more than doubled with 160 correctional and law enforcement agencies having active volunteer programs and 42 agencies planning to develop them by July 1973.

With such an expanding increase in correctional volunteer programs in California, the need arose to provide technical support and services to these programs. In addition, as new volunteer programs came into existence, the need for help in the areas of technical assistance, training, resources, and information to volunteer programs associated with criminal justice endeavors became very apparent.

The Department of the Youth Authority was charged legally with the responsibility for providing ongoing technical assistance and consultation services to local correctional agencies and concerned citizen groups in the field of delinquency rehabilitation and prevention. The Youth Authority was not able to meet the increased demand for information, consultation services, technical assistance, and training programs because of budgetary and workload limitations.

In April 1972, the Model Volunteer Project came into existence under a grant from the California Council on Criminal Justice. Funding of the Project permitted the California Youth Authority to meet its legal obligation to provide technical and consultative services to local correctional agencies and concerned citizen groups in the field of delinquency rehabilitation and prevention.

The evaluation of the Model Volunteer Program for the first year of the program's operation had as its goal the measurement and assessment of the extent to which the program has helped new volunteer programs or strengthened existing ones.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

1. To compile and distribute baseline information, thereby providing a clear picture of the extent and nature of delinquency related volunteer programs in California.
2. Establishment of a resource library.
3. To increase the number and quality of volunteer programs by:
 - A. Providing technical assistance in such areas as:
 - (1) recruitment and selection of volunteers
 - (2) the role of the volunteer in relation to the paid employee
 - (3) training
 - (4) supervision
 - (5) performance evaluation of volunteers
 - (6) problems of program development
4. Conduct regional meetings and conferences to better inform judges, correctional workers, and law enforcement personnel of the role of volunteers in programs providing services to delinquent children and youth.
5. Encourage the establishment of a statewide network of trained professional persons responsible for local correctional volunteer programs.
6. Increase the number of designated coordinators of county and state volunteer programs. Initially there were six part-time coordinators in the Youth Authority and ten full-time coordinators in parole.

EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND CRITERIA

Objective #1 - To determine the extent to which baseline data about correctional volunteer programs in California was collected, analyzed, and distributed.

Criteria: Was a survey conducted which served to find out the current status of volunteer programs in correctional-oriented agencies in California? What was learned about the methods and techniques utilized by these volunteer programs?

Objective #2 - To determine if a resource library was created that would compile and distribute information on delinquency related volunteer projects in California.

Criteria: Was a resource library set up? How many people actually utilized the services of the resource library?

Objective #3 - To determine the extent to which technical assistance was provided in order to increase the number and quality of volunteer programs.

Criteria: Was technical assistance provided? To what extent was technical assistance given in such areas as recruitment and selection of volunteers, the role of the volunteer in relation to the paid employee, training, supervision, performance evaluation of volunteers, and problems of program development.

Objective #4 - To determine if regional meetings and conference were held that would better inform judges, correctional workers, and law enforcement personnel.

Criteria: How often were these meetings held? Who attended these meetings? How well received were these meetings or conferences? Were the conferences evaluated? What was taught?

Objective #5 - To determine if a network of trained persons responsible for local correctional volunteer programs was established.

Criteria: How was the network developed? How was the network utilized?

Objective #6 - To determine if the number of designated coordinators was increased by 100%.

Criteria: Did the number of designated coordinators increase by 100%? Since there were 16 part/full-time coordinators recognized at the beginning, did this number increase to at least 32 part/full-time coordinators?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The California Council on Criminal Justice recently published a report (April 1973) which provided guidelines for conducting research evaluations in the criminal justice field. In the CCCJ report, three levels of evaluation were identified. The three levels of evaluation identified by CCCJ's evaluation unit included: (1) monitoring, (2) assessment, and (3) evaluative research. Monitoring was defined as the process of reviewing project activities in progress to determine consistency with contractual obligations and the probability that predetermined objectives will be achieved. Monitoring was designated by the evaluation unit as the lowest level of evaluation.

The second level of evaluation defined by the evaluation unit was assessment. This was characterized as pre-experimental research designs which involve collection of data through survey instruments. Assessments are thought to generally reflect principally subjective indicators of project performance.

The third and highest level of evaluation identified by the evaluation unit of CCCJ is "evaluative research". Evaluative research is characterized by a research design which typically involves comparison of an experimental group's data with that of a randomly assigned or matched control group. Furthermore, it generally involves: (1) use of valid test instruments, (2) an implicit awareness of relevant prior research, (3) application of conventionally accepted statistical tests to determine significance of project results, and (4) criteria for measuring project impact which makes it possible to determine whether a project is successful or not.

The research reported upon in this first year evaluation is characterized by the first two levels of evaluation -- monitoring and assessment. The measurement of program impact will not be conducted until the third year of the Model Volunteer Program.

Data Collection

The basic method of collecting data for the first year evaluation was by a telephone survey of the institutions, probation, or parole units served by the Model Volunteer Program staff.

The information for this evaluation was gathered from various volunteer programs throughout the state (specifically those agencies dealing with crime and delinquency) during the latter part of August 1973. A telephone survey was conducted on a regional basis; twenty-one agencies were randomly selected (approximately 34.4% of the total number of agencies served by the Project consultants) to participate.

Since the data collection was conducted on a sample basis, some questions pertaining to how often a particular activity took place are not measureable except when quantification of a particular activity was measured subjectively.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Model Volunteer Survey

The survey (which fulfills Research Objective #1) was conducted by the Model Volunteer Project during the fall of 1972. It was concerned with specific program elements of volunteer services and projects - active roles being performed by volunteers; resources for volunteer personnel; lay and professional leadership; management and operational systems and problems; training and research efforts; participation of administrators, staff, law enforcement, and judges; as well as several other expressed requests of interested persons.

The survey was designed in three phases. Phase 1, launched in August and September, determined the number and location of active and anticipated volunteer programs, and the workload for Phase 2 of the survey in addition to the potential workload for project staff during the year.

The questionnaire was mailed to 531 agencies, including: all county probation departments; all county sheriff departments; all local police departments; all Youth Authority parole regions and institutions; and all Department of Corrections parole regions and institutions.

A total of 377 questionnaires (approximately 71%) were returned. Of this total, 160 correctional and law enforcement agencies indicated they do have a program; 175 indicated they do not have a program; and 42 indicated they anticipate developing a program within the year.

Although this total of 160 agencies is in itself quite significant, we suspect the number of actual programs to exceed this number due to the fact that some agencies have multiple individual programs. Los Angeles County Probation Department, for instance, has at least 26 individual programs.

Phase 2 of the survey was carried out in September, October, November, and December. It consisted of indepth interviews with the 81 correctional agencies reporting programs. The survey instrument contained 233 multiple choice and open-ended type questions and covered all aspects of volunteer program administration, funding, methods, and activities.

Of these 81 agencies, three programs were conducted by informal arrangements which were not conducive to responding to the questionnaire. Six agencies failed to return the questionnaire and three completed such a small portion of the questionnaire that they were deemed invalid, thereby leaving a total of 69 agencies (78% response) from which the data was drawn. The final data includes:

- 39 probation departments
- 12 Youth Authority parole units
- 9 Youth Authority institutions
- 2 Department of Corrections parole units
- 7 Department of Corrections institutions

In these interviews, completed by December 31, 1972, information relative to 23 components of volunteer service delivery was gathered. They dealt primarily with matters of program planning, administration, techniques, policies, practices, and resources. The information was tabulated, coded, and programmed for computer retrieval. The final tabulation of data was completed May 25, 1973. It was then finalized into a publication.

The first section of the publication contains a directory of volunteer programs by agency. Included in this listing is the name, address, and phone number of the agency; their volunteer coordinator and/or contact person. The list has been organized by geographical region, i.e. North Central, North Coastal, and Southern Regions.

Also included in the directory is a presentation of tables showing volunteer activities, program components, and printed materials utilized

by California volunteer programs. Each agency has been grouped first by geographic location, and then by type (i.e. probation, Department of Corrections, or Youth Authority).

The second section contains a brief summary of survey results, including methods and techniques most frequently used, as well as some innovative suggestions from the survey respondents. This section is organized by task -- recruitment, selection, screening, etc. and does not identify the methods or techniques of specific agencies.

The third section of the publication summarizes the information and outlines its ultimate value.

The fourth and final section contains a brief summary of the resources and services of the Model Volunteer Project. These services, dispensed on a statewide basis, serve as a resource to individual volunteer programs located throughout California. (For details of the findings, please see Appendix A.)

Model Volunteer Project Services

The three most basic services provided by Model Volunteer Project staff include: (1) information, (2) technical assistance, and (3) training, workshops and conferences.

Table 1 indicates the way in which these services were utilized. Consultation and training were the most utilized services offered by the Model Volunteer Project during the first year.

T A B L E 1

Distribution of Model Volunteer Project Services
Provided by Utilization Responses of Interviewees *

| <u>Type Service</u> | <u>Number Responses</u> | <u>Percent **</u> |
|---|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Consultation | 14 | 19.7 |
| Training | 13 | 18.3 |
| Information | 12 | 16.9 |
| Conferences and Workshop Assistance | 7 | 9.9 |
| Evaluation: Methods, Definition and Perspective | 5 | 7.0 |
| Literature and Publications | 4 | 5.6 |
| Films and Tapes | 4 | 5.6 |
| Program Planning | 3 | 4.2 |
| Orientation | 2 | 2.8 |
| Expertise | 1 | 1.4 |
| P.R. Aids | 1 | 1.4 |
| Coordination of Coordinators | 1 | 1.4 |
| Impetus to Continue | 1 | 1.4 |
| Access to Professional Resources | 1 | 1.4 |
| Updating | 1 | 1.4 |
| Nothing | 1 | 1.4 |
| Totals | 71 | 100.0 |

* Multiple Responses Possible

** Does not round to 100% due to rounding error

The following is a listing of those services individuals surveyed felt was needed but wasn't provided by the Model Volunteer Project staff:

1. More time needs to be spent by the regional consultants with individual programs.
2. Standards for evaluation and development of volunteer programs
3. Need state level media and publicity -- also regional media access
4. Need for assistance with staff training
5. Development of a corrections recruiting system
6. Enough support
7. More emphasis on rural programs
8. Development of a reference manual

A reference and training manual (see Appendix B) has recently been published by the Model Volunteer Project as an aid to inform and train program personnel. The above requests were made prior to the publication, so no assessment as to the manual's effectiveness can be made for the first year evaluation.

Information Service and Resource Library

Although the establishment of a resource library was included in the specifics of the original project proposal, the first year has not seen its completion. However, the Model Volunteer Project attempted to maintain an information service to supplement its consultative and training programs.

The total number of people interviewed in the telephone survey was 37. However, some individuals did not answer specific questions.

Table 2 below indicates that 27% of those responding to the question "How was information received by the agency?", indicated they had initially requested specific information, while 40.5% indicated that information was sent routinely from the consultant.

T A B L E 2

| Distribution of the Ways in Which Volunteer Information was Sent to an Agency | | |
|--|--|----------------|
| <u>Methodology of Distribution</u> | <u>Number of Interviewees Responding</u> | <u>Percent</u> |
| Specific Information Requested | 10 | 27.0 |
| Sent from MVP Headquarters | 12 | 32.5 |
| Sent from Consultant | 15 | 40.5 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Totals | 37 | 100.0 |

In Table 3 below, 80% of the respondents indicate the information they received was "somewhat helpful" to quite helpful".

T A B L E 3

| Distribution of Respondents Reporting The Degree of Helpfulness of the Volunteer Information Received | | |
|--|--------------------------|----------------|
| <u>Degree of Helpfulness</u> | <u>Number Responding</u> | <u>Percent</u> |
| Quite Helpful | 6 | 24.0 |
| Somewhat Helpful | 14 | 56.0 |
| Not Helpful | 2 | 8.0 |
| Interesting | 2 * | 8.0 |
| Fairly Helpful | 1 * | 4.0 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| TOTALS | 25 | 100.0 |

* Not a structured response by respondent

The following unsolicited comments were made by some of those interviewed in the survey:

1. The information is too general; needs specification and localization
2. Not applicable to rural program
3. Needs more specifics on procedure and staff training, insurance and standards
4. Information could be improved by coordinating communications within the state
5. The information was beneficial, but it was a little voluminous

Based on the comments above, it appears the information is best received when it is requested and when it answers very specific information needs.

Consultant Service

This service provides for a communicative and informational liaison between the project headquarters and the individual programs. The development of the consultant service (comprised of three regional consultants) was included in the original Model Volunteer Project proposal in order to "deliver consultation and technical services to administrators, program managers and correctional personnel". When 'consultant service' was mentioned in the survey, it was generally meant to refer to one of the three regional consultants.

In the telephone survey, 17 of 24 (70.7%) reported they felt there was a need for a state level consultant for volunteer programs. In Table 4, respondents indicated in open-ended questions the ways in which they felt such a consultant might be useful.

TABLE 4

| Distribution of Multiple Response Answers | | |
|---|--------------------------|----------------|
| Pertaining to the Ways a State Level Consultant Might be Useful | | |
| <u>Consultant Utility</u> | <u>Number Responding</u> | <u>Percent</u> |
| Unity Between Programs; Organization and coordination of Local Efforts | 6 | 18.2 |
| To Offer a View of Other Programs; Comparison; Central Index; to Help Develop a Perspective of Local Programs | 6 | 18.2 |
| Advisory Capacity | 6 | 18.2 |
| Statewide and Regional Conferences and Meetings | 4 | 12.1 |
| Exchange of Information and Ideas; Feedback | 4 | 12.1 |
| Statewide Access to Important Resources | 3 | 9.0 |
| Program Development | 2 | 6.0 |
| Support | 1 | 3.0 |
| Recruitment | 1 | 3.0 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| TOTALS | 33 | 100.0 * |

* Percent does not add to 100.0 due to rounding error.

It is interesting to note that the 'unity between local programs' which the respondents appear to feel is an important aspect of the consultant service on a state level was not stressed in the original proposal whereas the 'statewide access to valuable resources' which a person in such a capacity could provide, was originally emphasized yet was mentioned substantially fewer times. Also, the 'program development' aspect of the position which was specifically outlined in the proposal, was only recognized by two individuals.

In the telephone survey, 7 of 24 (29.3%) felt the job of the state level consultant was not necessary. Reasons stated by the seven included:

1. The consultant is spread too thin; the closer to home the better
2. We need "scaled down" help -- our needs are unique
3. A state level consultant is not needed after a program has been established

One hundred percent of those interviewed felt that the communication between the Model Volunteer Project and their program was free and open, yet many had suggestions for improvement.

The following is a listing of the ways in which communication between agencies and the Model Volunteer Project staff could be improved according to interviewees in the survey:

1. Three regional consultants isn't enough; more staff perhaps - more contact is needed; personal consultation in the field is limited and is in greater demand than is available
2. Scheduling regular appointments would be helpful
3. MVP might develop its own newsletter to create an ongoing flow of information
4. No improvement can be made unless the Youth Authority gives more priority to volunteer programs

The following is a list of comments made by some of the interviewees in the survey:

Consultant Service

1. Our consultant is an excellent resource and has been very helpful
2. Since consultants are available locally we tend to look to local resource persons first
3. The regional consultant must cover a large area -- we don't see her very often and won't request a visit unless it is important
4. The consultant for our region should get a gold star

Training and Workshop Evaluation

Twenty of the twenty-seven (74%) had personally participated in a training session or workshop sponsored by the Model Volunteer Project. Of those with training, the average number of hours per individual was 22.1. The range of hourly participation was from 6 to 50 hours.

Table 5 below indicates that the average number of hours per region was greatest in the southern region and least in the northern region.

T A B L E 5

Average Number of Training Hours Per Region

| <u>Region</u> | <u>Average</u> |
|---------------|----------------|
| North Central | 24.5 Hours |
| North Coastal | 15.2 Hours |
| Southern | 26.6 Hours |

Since each training program differed substantially, an overall evaluation would be difficult to attempt. Questions were directed to participants of various training workshops in an effort to assess strengths and weaknesses of particular program formats.

Twelve respondents had attended other (non-training) workshops arranged by the Model Volunteer Project, and 15 individuals had not. One hundred percent of those attending the workshops felt they were productive and that they learned from them.

Statewide Network

A consultant list (see Appendix C) was created to help establish a network of trained professional persons responsible for local correctional volunteer programs. The consultant list was developed and is being utilized by the Model Volunteer Project consultants to provide special expertise to each agency they serve when necessary. In addition, the Model Volunteer Survey (see Appendix A) provides information as a major source in helping to establish and enhance the statewide network.

Volunteer Coordinators

During 1972, the number of part/full-time coordinators increased by 100%. Initially there were 16; by the end of 1972 this number had exceeded 32. The success of a volunteer program often hinges upon the commitment of management, at any level, to the volunteer program. The level a volunteer coordinator operates at in an agency often reflects the real commitment of management to volunteerism.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In evaluating the first year of the Model Volunteer Project, certain notes and observations have been made. Given the resources available for this project, much has been accomplished in the way of establishing rapport across the whole spectrum of correctional oriented agencies.

In summary, five of the original six program objectives have been met. Only the resource library has not fully been implemented. The five objectives that have been met include:

1. To compile and distribute baseline information, thereby providing a clear picture of the extent and nature of delinquency-related volunteer programs in California.

The development of the Model Volunteer Project Survey and Directory fulfilled this objective.

2. To increase the number and quality of volunteer programs by providing technical assistance in such areas as:
 - (a) recruitment and selection of volunteers
 - (b) the role of the volunteer in relation to the paid employee
 - (c) training
 - (d) supervision
 - (e) performance evaluation of volunteers
 - (f) problems of program development

In this objectives, subjective indicators were used. For example, 70.7% of the individuals interviewed by telephone felt that there was a need for a state level consultant for volunteer programs. This subjective feeling does not let us know, however, how much or to what extent the consultant services were actually provided. However, in general terms of "customer satisfaction", it appears the services provided by the three state consultants are considered most satisfactory.

It is recommended that the consultant staff be increased to give even better service. Perhaps with an increase in staff, more time can

be spent in more meaningful "program development assistance" at the local level.

3. Conduct regional meetings and conferences to better inform judges, correctional workers, and law enforcement personnel of the role of volunteers in programs providing services to delinquent children and youth.

Training and workshops appear from the findings to be a great success in this program. Approximately 74% of the individuals surveyed reported participating in a training session or workshop. Of those attending workshops, 100% felt they were productive and that they had learned from them.

It is recommended that training and workshops be continued since it is so well received.

4. Encourage the establishment of a statewide network of trained professional persons responsible for local correctional volunteer programs.

This objective has been met by the development of a consultant list. In addition, information in the Model Volunteer Project Survey provided lists of people with volunteer programs who can serve as a resource to individuals in need of people with special expertise.

It is recommended that the consultant list (see Appendix C) be expanded to include one large list of local volunteer program specialists. Every correctional oriented agency should receive such a list.

5. Increase the number of designated coordinators of county and state volunteer programs by 100%.

Initially, there were six part-time coordinators in the Youth Authority and ten full-time coordinators throughout the state. By the end of the first project year, this number of coordinators had increased to 79 -- 29 full-time and 61 part-time.

The designation and creation of a position for volunteer coordinator depends upon the commitment of management. It is true that better services are provided clients when volunteers are part of the rehabilitation or treatment program. Volunteers perform needed services professional specialists are very often unable to carry out. But management needs to see this relationship between having volunteers by their very presence in the agency and the demonstration of better management of correctional programs.

Management personnel of any organization has many demands put on them all the time. Initially, selling the idea to management of the need for volunteers is important. Maintaining the continued interest of management after a volunteer program has been implemented is equally important. The needed commitment of management to volunteer programs and the commitment to the hiring of volunteer coordinators in general depends on management's involvement with new and ongoing volunteer programs on a continuous basis.

It is recommended that:

1. Model Volunteer Project staff increase their contacts with top correctional officials or local county government officials to the extent of always inviting top management to meetings, workshops, or conferences, even when one doesn't anticipate management's participation.
2. Make more information available, whether solicited or not, to top correctional officials or local county government officials.

3. Create a column in the CJA's publication "Reach Out" on issues and answers. In essence, do more to educate correctional administrators about the importance of volunteerism in corrections.
4. Related to all of the above recommendations, is the need for more staff. It is recommended that highly capable volunteers be recruited to offer assistance to the three state volunteer consultants. The nature of the assistance offered would be determined by the Project Director and the stated needs of each of the three regional consultants.

END

1. 10. 1944