

Minutes

Franklin County Volunteer Network

Friday, February 12, 2010

Mt. Blue Regional School District Administrative Offices, Mt. Blue Middle School

Present: Isaac Frith, AmeriCorps*VISTA with United Way of the Tri-Valley Area; Michelle Mason, VISTA member with SeniorsPlus; Julia Terry, Sexual Assault Victims Emergency Services; Lisa Laflin, United Way of the Tri-Valley Area; Rick Dorian, LEAP; Allison Wood, UMF intern, United Way of the Tri-Valley Area; Edie Davis, AmeriCorps*VISTA with UMF; Janet Smith, Women, Work & Community; Cindy Brophy, Western Maine Community Action; Dennis O'Neil, Community Member and Volunteer Extraordinaire

Regrets: Linda Rood, HealthReach RSVP, Crystal Cook, United Methodist Economic Ministry, Pauline Rodrigue, Mt. Blue Regional School District, Trudy Hamilton, SeniorsPlus

Welcome and Sharing:

Julia Terry, SAVES:

- Julia invited folks to boogie away their cabin fever by attending a fund-raising dance on March 13 for SAVES. It will take place at UMF's North Dining Hall, beginning at 7:30 p.m.
- March for Violence Free Communities will be held April 8 (tentative) this year. It is collaboration with Peace in Our Families, and will likely take place in the evening.
- SAVES currently is hosting 2 UMF interns, 3 practicum students, and 8 "regular" volunteers. 12 volunteers are currently enrolled in the 48 hr. helpline training

Janet Smith, WWC:

- Western Maine CASH Coalition, which is a collaborative offering free tax preparation and asset building guidance, is seeking additional volunteers for the tax preparation component of the program. The group is looking at how to engage more community members, and how to offer more effective training. Community members who serve in other capacities, such as greeters, and asset coaches are engaged and working well.

Rick Dorian, LEAP:

- 125 volunteers were engaged with LEAP in 2009. Rick is interested in developing a better understanding of how to educate, train, and recruit volunteers as there is an ever expanding need for volunteers within his agency that works with individuals with cognitive and intellectual disabilities.
- Rick will be conducting a series of workshops with current families who use LEAP's services, to talk about supporting each other better as funding gets tighter and tighter and more unpredictable. This is expanding upon a successful DREAM program.
- LEAP currently has 160 employees

Michelle Mason, SeniorsPlus:

- Michelle is continuing to work with volunteer managers in Androscoggin County to establish a group based on the model of the Franklin Volunteer Network, which she views as very successful.

Cindy Brophy, WMCA:

- Operation Santa Claus, which is coordinated by Cindy as part of WMCA's Community Services Department programs, worked with 110 volunteers this year.
- Cindy also works with volunteers that keep the doors open at the area's 10 food pantries. She coordinates the distribution of Federal commodities.
- WMCA is once again coordinating the Seeds of Life program. Seedlings will be given away on Earth Day.
- Cindy is also working with families to start a Family Development Account

Lisa Laflin, United Way:

- Lisa shared with members a growing resource library of information and volunteer opportunities, which she will bring with her, but also post on UWTVA's website.

Rick Dorian asked if there is a way for those involved with the Franklin Volunteer Network to communicate routinely in the interim between meetings. Lisa said she is looking into this and will report back. Currently, the minutes of the meetings are posted on the United Way of the Tri-Valley Area's website, as well as other relevant material. She will explore other forum opportunities through their website, or alternatives, such as establishing a Facebook Page.

Social Networking

Michelle Mason gave a compelling presentation on social networking. Her PowerPoint presentation and accompanying hand outs are attached. There was considerable discussion, and, due to timing, her presentation was shortened. The discussion about using social networks to their full advantage for volunteer recruitment, retention, training, and communication will be explored at future meetings.

Time Dollar Network

Lisa distributed a brief introduction to the Hour Exchange – Portland, formerly known as the Maine Time Dollar Network. This is a non-profit clearinghouse for community members to share services. The foundation is a belief that all time is valuable and on an equal exchange. Visit <http://www.hourexchangeportland.org/> for more information. The concept was applauded. Network members could see the successful application of an hour exchange program in Greater Franklin County, but there were many questions asked that could not be answered without someone more experienced to address them appropriately. As there was interest in exploring this further, Lisa will invite a representative from Hour Exchange Portland to a future meeting.

Looking Ahead:

(All meetings are held at the Mt. Blue Middle School in the conference room of the administrative offices. Entrance is to the left of the school, across from the bus garage.)

Next meeting April 9, 2010.

National Volunteer Week April 18-24!

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Laflin

Executive Director

United Way of the Tri-Valley Area