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Volunteer Leadership – an Evidence-Based Perspective

Arlene A. Pietranton, PhD, CAE

apietranton@asha.org

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Executive Council of American Speech Correction Association 1946



Let's Set the Volunteer Stage

- What's your association's biggest challenge?
- What's your association's biggest success?



What evidence is there?

What's "best practice"?





What 16,944 individuals can tell us about why they do, or *don't*, affiliate.

How individuals determine value
and why they choose to belong.

THE DECISION TO JOIN

JAMES DALTON AND MONICA DIGNAM

RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS FROM ASAE & THE CENTER FOR ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP

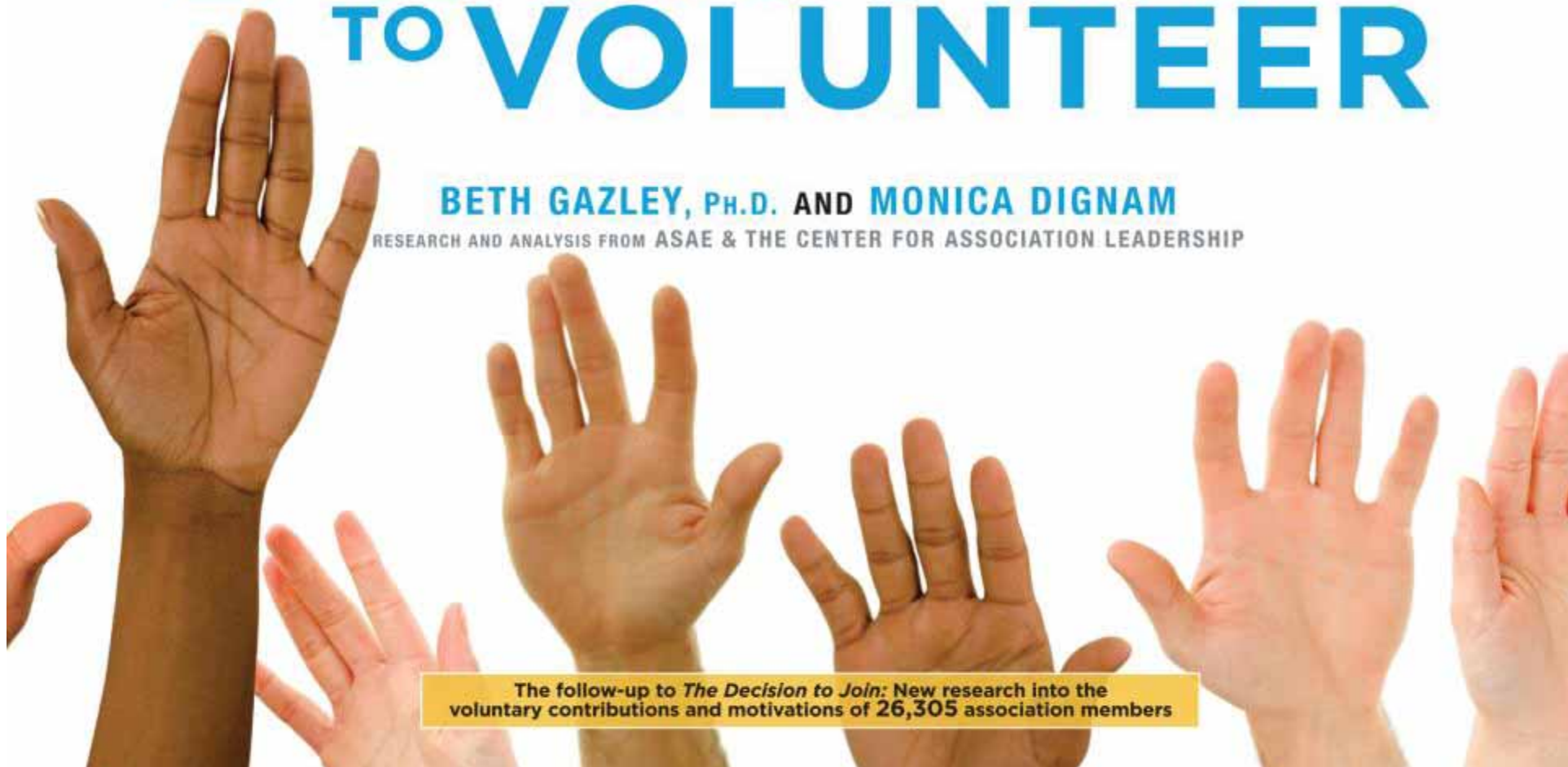
THE DECISION TO VOLUNTEER

Why people give their time
and how you can engage them

BETH GAZLEY, PH.D. AND MONICA DIGNAM

RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS FROM ASAE & THE CENTER FOR ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP

The follow-up to *The Decision to Join*: New research into the
voluntary contributions and motivations of 26,305 association members



The Decision to Join & Volunteer

*How individuals determine value ...
why they choose to belong to and
volunteer with an association*

Will focus on three areas:

- Unique Value Proposition
- Generations and Career Levels
- Affiliation/Volunteerism

Overall Association Membership Trends

- ❑ **52% report that their organizations membership has increased over the last renewal cycle.**
- ❑ **5% median increase since 2001**
- ❑ **30% report no change**
- ❑ **18% reported decrease in membership**
- ❑ **4% median decrease since 2001**

State S-L-H Association Membership Trends

Since 2004 –

- Increase – by 5%? by 10%? More?
- Decrease – by 5% by 10%? More?

ASHA's membership has increased by 14%

Overall Membership Retention Rates

- 91% Trade Organizations
- 87% Individual Membership Organizations
- ASHA's = 97.9%

Do You Know What Yours Is?





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Myth #1

People today don't value associations like they did in the "old days"

When asked a series of questions about the value of associations in general, the industry gets very strong positive ratings and negatives that are nearly negligible in all segments.

Universal Themes

- Recognition of Value to Society
- Keeping up with new information
- Keeping pace with Technology
- Lack of public awareness of your field
- Inadequate funding sources
- Expanding body of knowledge
- Supply of capable professionals

Unique Value Proposition

Key Finding:

The individual decision to join does not hinge on a cost-benefit calculation, which conventional wisdom argues.



**What's in it for me
vs.
What's in it for the industry or (public)**



Personal and Business Benefits

- Access to the most up to date information available
- Educational program offerings
- Opportunities to network with others
- Access to career information and employment opportunities
- Access to products, services and suppliers
- Opportunities to gain leadership experience
- A reference directory of members/practitioners
- Member discounts or group purchasing activities

Benefits to the Field

- Promoting the value of the field or industry to the larger society
- Increasing public awareness of the field or industry
- Influencing legislation and regulations that affect the field
- Providing standards or guidelines that support quality
- Gathering, analyzing and publishing data on trends in the field
- Conducting research on significant issues affecting the field

Benefits to the Field (continued)

- Supporting student education and entry into the field
- Attracting competent people into the field
- Certifying those who meet critical competency standards
- Providing awards or recognition for excellence in the field

Unique Value Proposition

Providing the Right Benefits:

- Career Advantages
- Continuing Education
- Community
- Opportunities to Serve
- Accountability and Measurable Results

Myth #2

Members don't renew because they don't value the organization or see the ROI for their membership dollars.

Approximately 1/2 of the respondents who dropped their membership did so due to career and life changes rather **than performance of the association**

Affiliation and Volunteerism

What percent of your members are involved in the work of the Society?

(Do not include attending events)

Level of Involvement

- Govern/Admin 6.8%
- Committee 7.8%
- Ad Hoc 15.5%
- None 69.9%

Affiliation and Volunteerism

FINDINGS:

Probability of being a “promoter” of the association increases with level of involvement



Leaders vs. Members

The importance attributed to program activities varies with level of involvement. In some cases, elected leaders are not in sync with rank-and-file members

Generations

- GI Elders (born before 1925)
- Silent Generation (1925-1945)
 - ◆ Retired
 - ◆ Still working
- Baby Boomers (1946-1964)
- Gen-X (1965-1979)
- Millennial/Gen Y (1979- 2000)



Myth # 3

Generation X and Y are not joiners
or volunteers like the baby boomers
and earlier generations

Smith Bucklin Study cites...

- Generation X and Y show great promise to join associations as they move into their peak earning years.
- Given rising incomes and improving job opportunities, younger workers show every indication of joining associations at even higher rates than boomers.

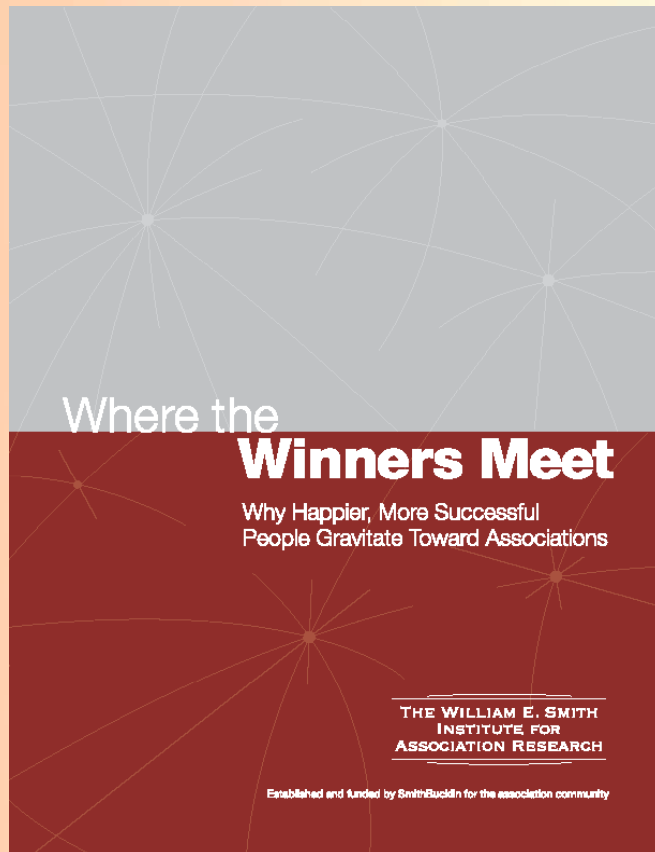


Generation or Career Stage

- The generational model focuses on characteristics that influence decisions
- The career stage model looks at needs that change over time in a predictable manner.



Association members = Winners



Association Members:

- Earn More
- Are Happier
- Are Leaders

Are Winners



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Generation and Career Level

Finding:

Values differ by career level (generation)

- Networking and connecting
- Professional training
- Representing the field to the government
- Opportunity for leadership experience

Younger Members/Volunteers Expect

- Greater return on their investment of time
- To see immediate impact from their involvement
- Their association to impact their communities in a greater way

Take Aways

- ✓ Promote the benefits to the industry and the personal/business benefits
- ✓ Create an adhocracy – increase the number of volunteer opportunities
- ✓ Respond to member needs based on where their is today (stages)

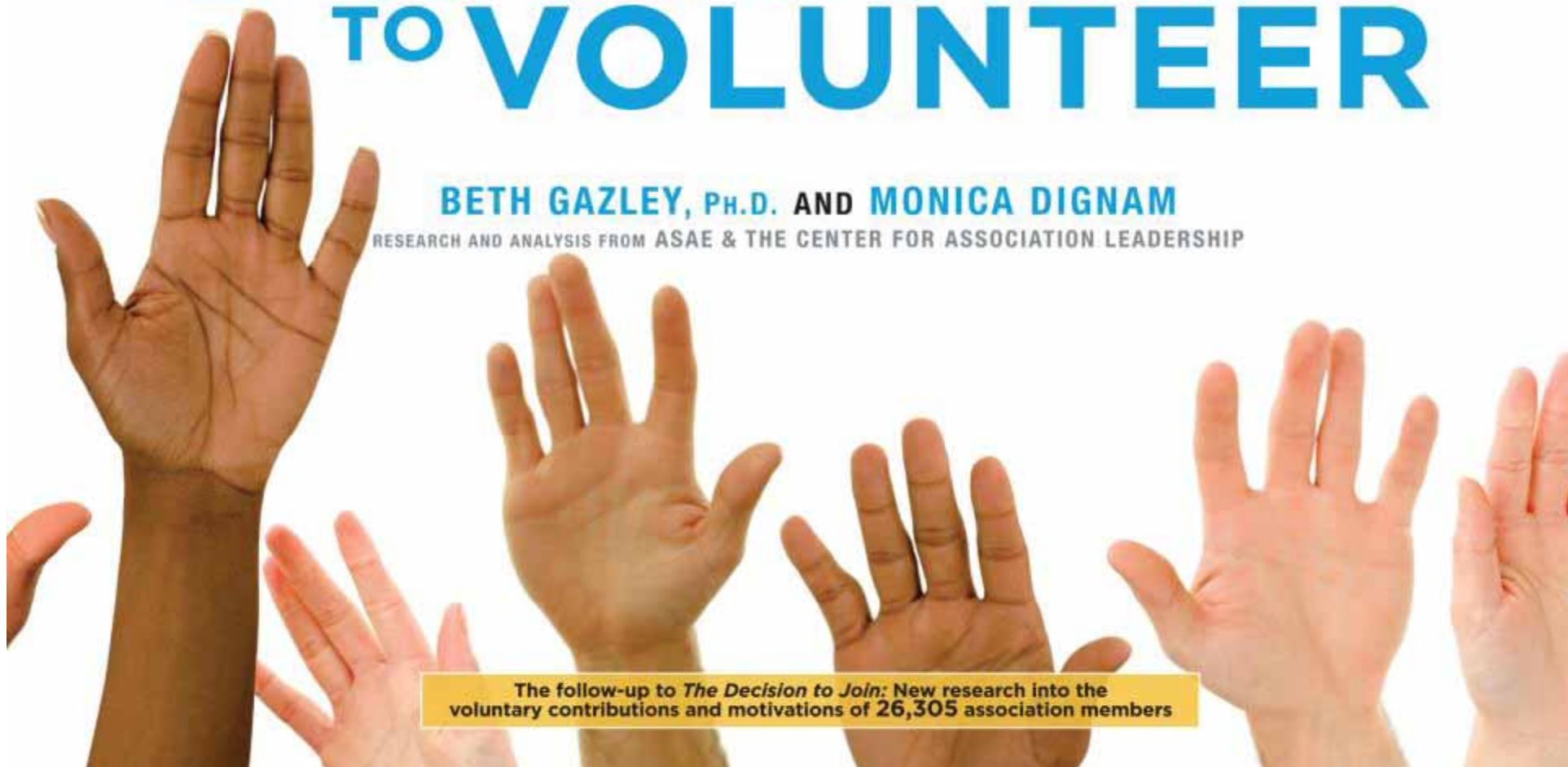
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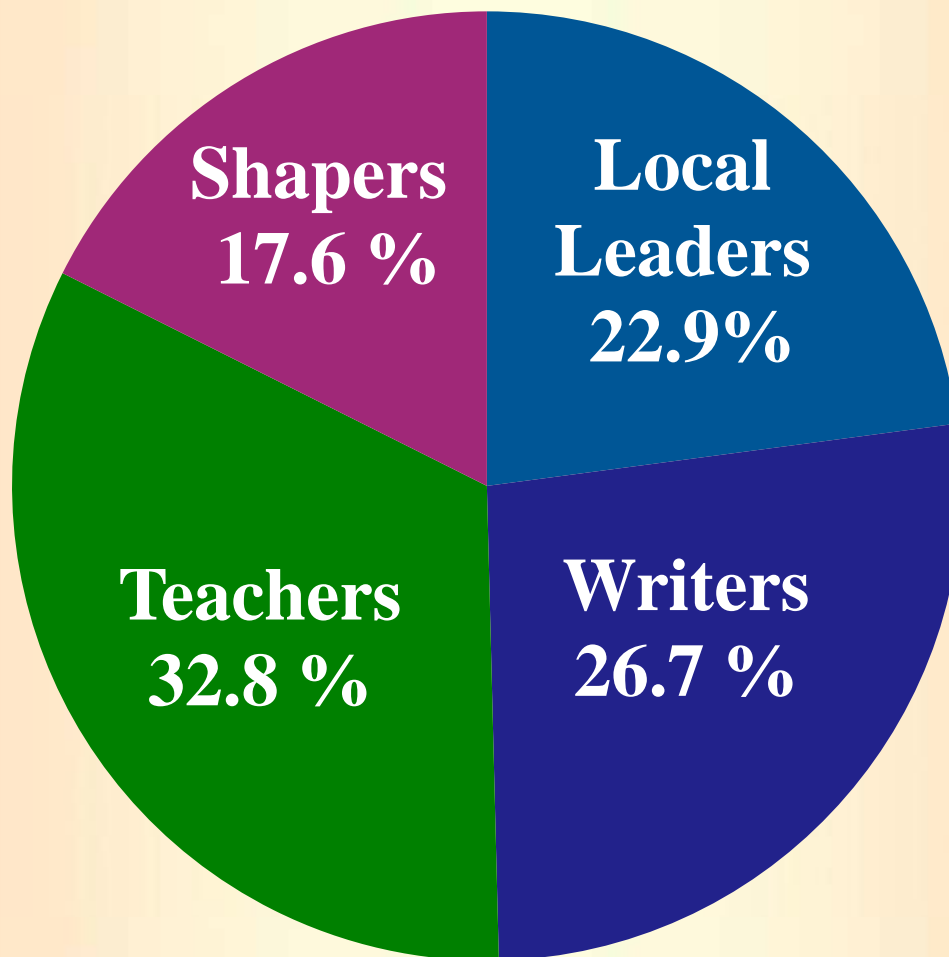
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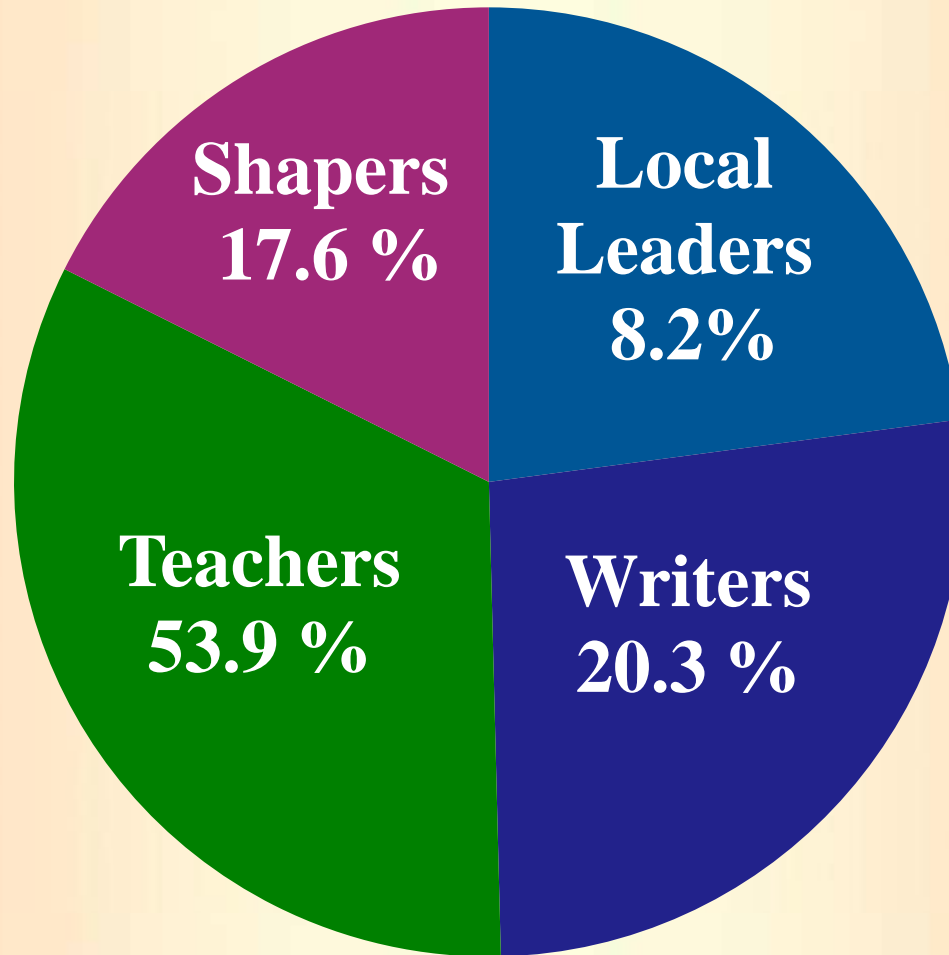
Five Key Findings

1. NOT ALL VOLUNTEERS ARE ALIKE

Patterns of Association Volunteering



Patterns of ASHA Volunteering



Local Leaders

- Focused on local chapter board and committee service
- Mentoring, coaching, tutoring, and membership recruitment
- Two thirds at entry or mid-career levels of employment.

Writers

The “subject matter experts” of your organization:

- Presentations, expert panels
- Publishing
- Standards review

Teachers

- Mentoring, coaching, tutoring, professional advice and membership recruitment
- Contribute the fewest volunteer hours for the cosponsor organization

Shapers

- Engaged in every activity and perform the majority of volunteer work within the associations participating in this study.
 - ◆ Mentoring
 - ◆ Membership recruitment
 - ◆ Local and national board and committee service
 - ◆ Presentations
 - ◆ Fund raising
- Older ages, longer membership span, more academic backgrounds, more senior career levels.

Volunteer activity	Local Leaders	Writers	Teachers	Shapers
Governance	55.6%	5.5%	.7%	45.5%
Committee / Ongoing	43.8%	31.1%	3.0%	36.4%
Ad Hoc	.7%	63.4%	96.3%	18.1%

Paradox

Younger members may be less engaged in association volunteering now but

...more likely to see the benefits of volunteerism generally.

Paradox

Older members may be more engaged in volunteering now but ...

... *less* likely to intend to volunteer in the future.

Paradox

Members with families may be less likely to volunteer for associations but ...

...more likely to seek connections to their professional world through volunteering.

2. IT'S POSSIBLE TO INCREASE ASSOCIATION VOLUNTEERING

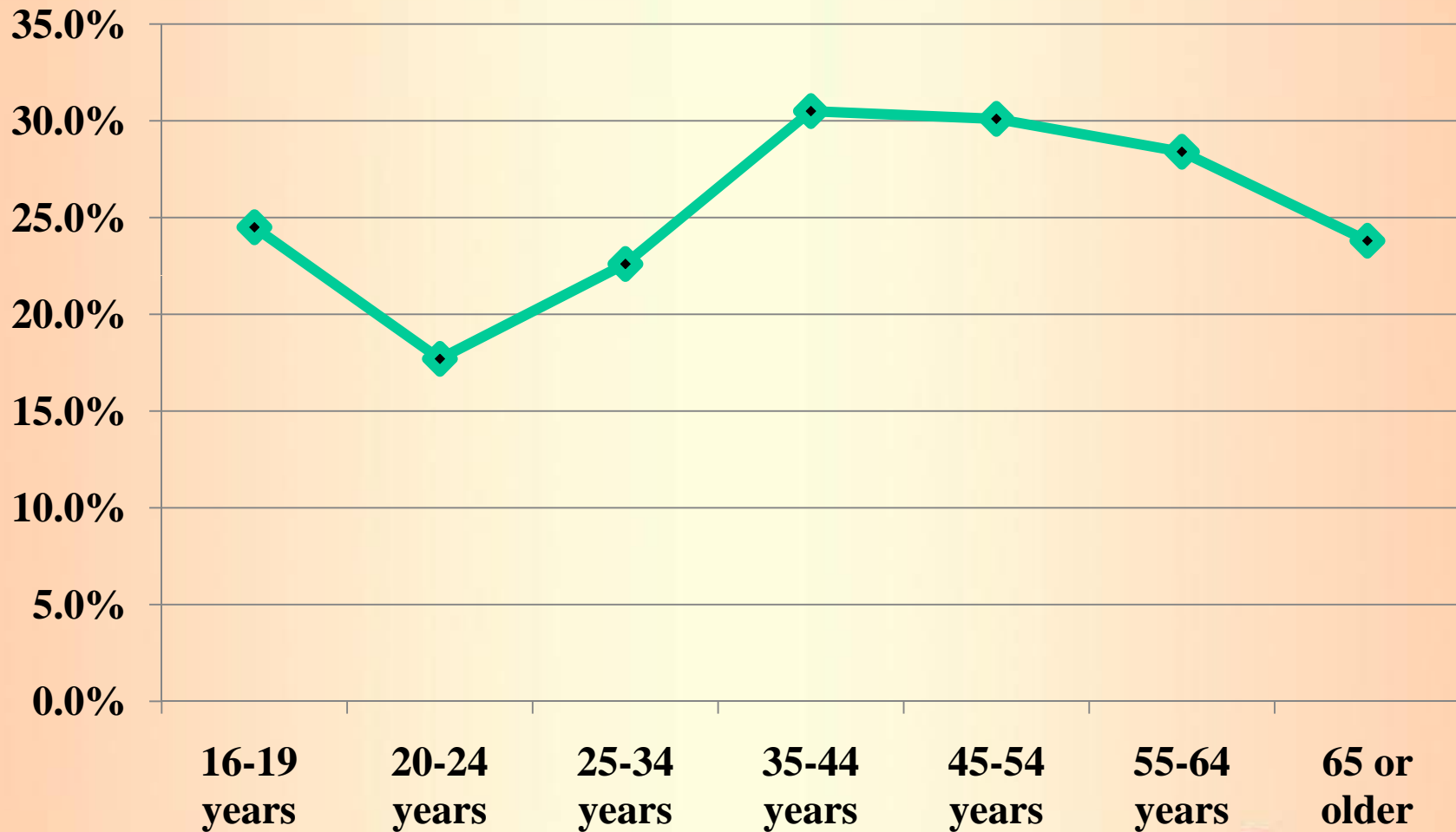
First the Good News...

Association members are an ideal demographic group for volunteer recruitment:

- History
- Family tradition
- Skilled
- Satisfied
- Link to career path

2007 U.S. Rates of Volunteering by Age Group

(Bureau of Labor Statistics)



The Challenge for Associations

- Community *and* professional volunteering?
- ‘Busman’s holiday’ or membership benefit?
- Getting their attention.
- Membership satisfaction and volunteering.

	Volunteering for any organization	Association volunteering
In the last 12 months	77 %	36 %
In the past	15 %	9 %
Never	8 %	55 %

Total hours reported:	Decision to Volunteer 2007		Bureau of Labor Statistics 2007 %
	Volunteering for ANY organization %	Volunteering for cosponsor %	
1-12 hours	12.2	57.2	20.3
13-49	28.3	26.5	23.6
50-99	25.1	10.2	15.7
100-249	29.8	5.6	30.1
500 or more	4.6	.6	6.1

Number of organizations volunteered for in past 12 months	Bureau of Labor Statistics 2007 %	Decision to Volunteer 2007 %
One	68.8	18.8
Two	19.7	31.3
Three	7.3	28.3
Four	2.5	12.4
Five or more	1.4	9.1

3. UNDERSTANDING WHY PEOPLE VOLUNTEER



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The “Pro-Social” Volunteer

4. UNDERSTANDING EFFECTIVE VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

How did you first learn about volunteer opportunities?	Full Sample %	Millennial Generation (Ages <31) %
Asked by staff or another volunteer	22.2	17.9
Local chapter, section	14.2	14.4
Meeting, conference	13.4	10.7
Answered a call for volunteers, ad or website posting	10.4	8.0
Contacted organization	2.8	3.2

Why do Members Begin Volunteering?

I would start volunteering now if (in rank order):

1. Meaningful opportunity
2. Right skills
3. Accessible location
4. Interest in volunteering
5. No loss of income
6. Short-term assignment
7. Information about volunteer opportunities
8. Training
9. Employer support



5. RETAINING VOLUNTEERS AND ATTRACTING NON-VOLUNTEERS



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Why Don't Members Volunteer?

Uncontrollable Reasons:

- Time constraints
- Family or professional responsibilities
- ??

Why Don't Members Volunteer?

Controllable reasons (in rank order):

- Lack of information about volunteer opportunities.
- Volunteer elsewhere.
- Never asked to volunteer.
- Lack of information about virtual volunteer opportunities.
- Lack of information about short-term assignments.

Why Do Volunteers Leave?

- Lack of follow through
- Inadequate expense reimbursement
- Tension with staff or other volunteers
- Pecking orders
- No tangible benefits
- Lack of recognition

Key Takeaways

- Those who do not currently volunteer simply may not have been asked.
- Volunteers respond to a wide variety of motivations, incentives and recruitment strategies
- Association volunteers are more receptive to the career benefits of volunteering, but opportunities to do something for a cause that is important to them still matter more
- Volunteers follow different patterns of engagement, which may in turn affect satisfaction and turnover
- Volunteers who serve an organization through largely informal activities may require additional organizational effort to track, support, and recognize for their efforts.

A Few Things to Remember: #1

Association members reserve most of their volunteer hours for community organizations – not associations

A Few Things to Remember: #2

Association members expect career benefits from volunteering; however they are interested in *greater good*
(remember DTJ)

A Few Things to Remember: #3

Volunteers respond best when
asked directly to do
meaningful tasks

A Few Things to Remember: #4

A meaningful experience keeps them coming back.

Volunteer expectations vary according to career stage

A Few Things to Remember: #5

Millennial and Generation X
Members are slightly less engaged
and volunteer differently

A Few Things to Remember: #6

Members regard volunteering as a benefit of membership and professional improvement

A Few Things to Remember: #7

Recognize the “ad hoc” volunteer.

“Ad Hoc” does not mean less value –
recognize them for their work

Remember, strength in numbers. (“Promoters”)

A Few Things to Remember: #8

Organizational strategies can support
– or - discourage volunteering

It's within our control!

Ten Key Points for Volunteer Programs

1. Know your membership.
2. No cookie-cutter approaches.
3. Link your volunteer program to your mission.
4. Match opportunities and skills.
5. Treat volunteer involvement as a member benefit
6. Recognize all volunteer contributions.
7. Effective volunteer programs must be adequately resourced.
8. But money isn't everything.
9. Train staff to work with volunteers.
10. Don't write off the non-volunteer.

Resources

- ASAE and the Center website
 - ◆ Download the FREE Executive Summary
 - ◆ Review discussion questions
 - ◆ Learn about benchmarking opportunities
- www.asasecenter.org

- Additional Research: www.Smithbucklin.com/smithinstitute
 - ◆ Future Generations and Association Participation
 - ◆ Where the Winners Meet

- <http://www.pointsoflight.org/resources/research/calculator.cfm>

Resources

- By the People – Ellis & Campbell (2005)
- Bureau of Labor Statistics www.bis.gov/cps
- Center for Civil Society Studies www.jhu.edu/ccss
- Corporation for National and Community Service www.cns.gov
- Points of Light Foundation
www.pointsoflight.org/resources/research/calculator.com

Advisory Councils' Relationship to ASHA's Board of Directors

- ASHA's single governing body is its Board of Directors (BOD).
- Advisory Councils serve in an advisory capacity to the BOD.



Advisory Council Members are Representatives “Of”

- “*Representatives of*” ensure that the views, beliefs, values and self interests of the varied constituencies they know the best are on the table as part of the conversation.



Advisory Council Members are NOT Representatives “For”

- “*Representatives for*” see themselves as the elected representatives of a particular constituency.
- They voice the self interests and opinions of that constituency, and vote on behalf of that constituency's interests.



Responsibilities of ASHA's Advisory Councils

1. Discuss & rank issues of concern
2. Advise the BOD on issues
3. Provide advice on issues that the BOD brings to the Advisory Councils.



Responsibilities of ASHA's Advisory Councils

4. Review the approved Association budget and make recommendations for future programs and services that support ASHA's Strategic Pathway.
5. Participate in the formal peer review of ASHA policy documents.



Responsibilities of ASHA's Advisory Councils

6. Each Council Elects:
 - a. A Chair and Vice Chair
 - b. Members from their profession to the following ASHA Committees/Boards:
 - Committee on Honors
 - Committee on Nominations and Elections
 - Financial Planning Board
 - Government Relations & Public Policy Board