



A statewide conference on volunteerism is set for May 8-10 in Sunset Beach. It is sponsored by the N.C. Association of Volunteer Administration and the Governor's Office. Call (704) 465-1702.

### Compulsory service

## Nonprofits cope with reluctant volunteers

**Not all volunteers work willingly. Nonprofits that deal with students seeking credit for graduation or people working off a court sentence must deal with volunteers who lack sincere dedication and commitment.**

By EALENA CALLENDER

While volunteerism most often is motivated by a desire to help others, many organizations also use volunteers who are fulfilling educational or legal requirements.

Some North Carolina public schools, such as Chapel Hill High School and the North Carolina School of Science and Math in Durham, require students to perform volunteer hours in order to graduate. Some universities require or encourage students to volunteer to get hands-on experience for majors such as physical therapy and leisure studies. And the courts regularly sentence offenders to perform community service hours.

In some cases, charitable organi-

zations are faced with workers who lack sincere dedication to service and are unwilling to make a long-term commitment. For other organizations, mandatory volunteer programs are viewed as a way to help stimulate a genuine interest in service that could lead to continued volunteer work.

At Chapel Hill High School, students are required to perform 50 hours of community service to graduate. While some parents and students have complained about the requirement, more than 100 charitable organizations have signed up to work with the students.

"I think the principle behind [mandatory volunteer programs], in helping people develop a community service orientation, is important," says Colleen Lanigan, coordinator of the Orange County Special Olympics, which uses volunteers from Chapel Hill High School. "It's something that we don't foster in our society any more."

But she notes a difference between volunteers who come on their own and those who are required to volunteer by local high

### RESOURCES

schools, UNC-CH and service clubs.

"Their commitment level and the depth of their sincerity is not as much, and I have problems with them as soon as they complete their hours," Lanigan says of volunteers who are fulfilling requirements. On the other hand, she says "those who sign up because they have a real sincere interest are much more enthusiastic."

UNC Hospitals also work with volunteers who are required to work for high school credit.

"The only difference is how long they stay," says Jenny Fisher, assistant volunteer coordinator who runs the junior volunteer program at UNC Hospitals. "The kids that are here to do it on their own tend to be a little bit more vested, they don't really even ask about their hours."

In addition, the hospital places volunteers who are sentenced by the courts to community service. "Some have a real chip on their shoulders and they're angry at the court system," she says. "And some think it's

unfortunate but I'll pay my dues that I have to pay. It's all an individual point of view."

Offenders are assigned to community service projects through the state Community Service Program. The program interviews the workers and places them with public or nonprofit agencies based on the needs of the agency and of the volunteer. The agency regularly makes placements to the Salvation Army, homeless shelters and state parks.

Director Gary Eichelberger says nonprofits generally are eager to work with these volunteers.

"They get a lot of work done that they would have to pay to get done," he says. "It allows them to do other things with some of their money."

He says the quality of work depends more on the level of supervision by the agency than the motivation of the workers. "The agencies do an excellent job of supervising and making sure that you do it like they want," he says.

At Wake Medical Center in Raleigh, volunteer coordinators say there isn't a distinct difference between those volunteers sentenced

to community service by the court system and other volunteers.

"These folks, just like everyone else, take pride in what they're doing," says Marie Johnson, volunteer service specialist. "If somebody's a sloppy worker, they're going to be a sloppy worker no matter what reason they're here."

The coordinators say the volunteers usually stay beyond their required time. They estimate that 90 percent of them continue working for the hospital.

"A lot of them stay with us, that's the really positive thing about it," says Bethany Kelly, volunteer service specialist. "Many of them continue on their volunteer work because they enjoy it so much."

Some volunteer coordinators say that one significant problem with mandatory volunteer programs is finding jobs for the increased number of volunteers. Some organizations can accommodate only a certain number of volunteers and they are finding now that they may have to turn people away.

"Volunteering is now competitive," says Fisher of UNC Hospitals.

### Working with diversity



Wake County high school students participated in a diversity workshop at the Wake County Health Department on a Saturday in early March. At right, students attempt to stand up as one while locking arms. The Student Service Council, a United Way program, organized the event.

Photos by Gary Allen



### Learning by serving Team provides alternatives for young offenders

Instead of being sent to overcrowded training schools, some Durham youngsters are getting the chance to help their community and themselves by participating in the Youth Team, a project of the Durham Service Corps.

By EALENA CALLENDER

Durham

When volunteers finished planting the vegetable garden behind the offices of the Council for Senior Citizens in Durham, Bill Anderson says it grew like never before.

The Council for Senior Citizens was one of the first nonprofits to work with volunteers in the Youth

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### BRIEFLY

#### Association offers certification exam

The North Carolina Association of Volunteer Administrators will give a certification exam May 8. Volunteer administrators with five or more years of experience who have completed the Governor's One on One training program are eligible. Applications must be filed by April 17.

#### Tar Heel nonprofits to debut in PBS series

The all-volunteer Human Service Alliance of Winston-Salem is one of several nonprofits profiled on a new public television series called "The Visionaries," which will begin airing this summer. Hosted by actor Sam Waterston, the series will portray the work of ordinary people who have discovered the joys of volun-

teering. Producer Bill Mosher is seeking more organizations to profile. If interested in applying, write: The Visionaries, 145 Wood Road, Braintree, MA 02184. For more information, call (617) 356-6804.

#### Accountants have tax tips for donors

The North Carolina Association of Certified Public Accountants has these tips for taxpayers: have a receipt for any charitable contribution of \$250 or more (a canceled check is no longer adequate proof of a gift) and be sure to deduct out-of-pocket expenses in connection with nonprofit volunteer work. For details, call (800) 722-2836.

#### Seeking volunteers with a classic touch

Classic radio station WCPE in Wake Forest needs volunteers to donate daytime hours during weekdays on a regular basis. And in April, the station wants extra volunteers to help out with its annual fundraiser. For details on shifts and responsibilities, call Terry Marcellin-Little at (910) 556-5178.

#### Experienced mothers helping new moms

SAFEchild, a nonprofit providing support for families in Wake County, seeks volunteers to participate in the Welcome Baby program. The program pairs a new mother with an experienced mother to act as a "friendly mentor" for the first six months of the infant's life. Call (919) 231-5800 for details.