



# VOLUNTEER TODAY

**DECEMBER 1999**

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## INTRODUCTION

This edition of Volunteer Today features several articles about non-traditional volunteerism. It highlights the volunteerism of our staff and discusses how volunteers are used in community corrections.

Volunteer Today is an official newsletter of the Bureau of Prisons (BOP). It is published electronically each quarter to showcase the agency's volunteer and citizen participation programs.

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## CITIZEN VOLUNTEERS IN COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

Sal Seanez, Assistant Director for Community Corrections and Detention

I would like to take a moment to speak about the non- traditional roles citizen volunteers play in community corrections.

The needs of men and women confined to an institution, change substantially when they are transferred to community corrections facilities. When an offender is released from confinement, he or she is faced with many issues, e.g., reestablishment into the community, employment, renewal of family and social ties, the stigma of being an offender, the need for resources. Without the benefit of a proper support network, offenders may violate conditions of release and return to prison.

For the period of July 1 through September 30, 1999, reports indicate almost 1,000 volunteers served in our contract facilities across the country. The ratio of volunteers who offer religious services in community corrections facilities is significantly lower than that of institutions. In community corrections, greater emphasis is placed on non-traditional areas of volunteerism. Services performed by volunteers range from teaching life skills to participation on victim impact panels.

As BOP staff and contractors implement additional ways to assist inmate reintegration into society, we expect to benefit from other areas of non-traditional volunteerism in community corrections.

It is important that we recognize that volunteers assist us in many ways. As we enter a new millennium, I challenge correctional staff and our contractors to continue to look for innovative ways to increase the number of non-traditional volunteers and the types of programming they provide.

Thank you and best wishes for 2000.

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## **TRANSFORMING VOLUNTEERISM INTO MARKETABLE WORK EXPERIENCE**

Alice DavisJohnson Administrator, Volunteer Management Branch

Over 10,000 volunteers provide services at Bureau of Prisons institutions and contract community correction facilities. Each provides a valuable service to us that is greatly appreciated. Many hold paid jobs concurrent with their volunteer positions or will seek part or full-time paid employment in the future. For this reason, it is fitting to discuss how to market volunteer experience. Effectively communicating volunteer service and skills on a resume and cover letter is not an easy task.

It is easy to overlook unpaid work when compiling or updating resumes. Many volunteers include the volunteer experience at the end of their work history as a separate category. Volunteer service is respected and regarded as creditable experience that should be integrated into the main body of a resume. Unless there is a specific reason for highlighting unpaid work out of context with the rest of a chronological resume, integrating it with paid work, giving volunteer service the same weight and importance as a paid job, is recommended.

This is especially important if the paid positions listed are separated by blocks of time during which volunteer experience has occurred. Most employers look for continuity and growth as a worker changes jobs. Unaccounted time on the resume waves a "red flag."

Resumes should be written to target a specific position or employer. For example, when applying for a job as a manager, experience as a volunteer Life Skills instructor could be referenced as experience in motivating inmates and construed as evidence of the ability to supervise and lead. It is advantageous to include as many of these similarities between the experience and the prospective position is possible. The most important similarities should also be highlighted in the cover letter.

It is important to distinguish unpaid experience; however, it is not necessary to use the word "volunteer" to make that distinction.

It is also helpful to clearly identify the period of time served as a volunteer. Giving the specific number of volunteer hours rendered each week or month would be helpful to a potential employer. Applicants may also provide a total number of relevant training hours received.

Volunteers in the Bureau of Prisons make a difference in our institutions and contract facilities, and this experience may also make a difference in qualifying them for other paid positions.

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## **VICTIMS SERVE AS VOLUNTEERS**

Addie Richburg, Program Coordinator, Volunteer Management Branch

In January 1996, a conference was held in Washington, D.C., to address how the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) would deal with victims' rights. Within two months of the conference, a BOP workgroup was formed. One recommendation of the workgroup was to implement six to nine pilot restorative justice programs in each BOP region. The goal of these programs was to increase offenders' awareness of the impact their crimes have on victims. Victim Impact Panels, staffed by victims who volunteer their time, are not new.

Victim Impact Panels began in early 1980 when a group of California Youth Authority professionals realized it was not enough to teach an offender to read or weld if he or she

returned to the community with no respect for others. Victim Impact Panels are not designed to replace conventional sanctions associated with confinement. They are offered to enhance and supplement traditional programs by placing offenders face-to-face with real people whose lives have been permanently changed by someone who chose to commit a crime. Victim Impact Panels are customized to meet the need of each contract facility or institution. They are designed so both the young and adult offender will:

Accept responsibility for past criminal actions,  
Understand the impact of crime on victims,  
Develop personal safety skills with a focus on crime prevention,  
Learn how to bond with positive, healthy people, and  
Contribute to their communities in a way that will prevent future victimization.

To date, the Tampa and Baltimore halfway houses and the Federal Correctional Complex in Coleman, Florida, have been selected as pilot sites for victim impact programs. In addition to these, as of November 3, 1999, a survey of BOP contract facilities reveal active victim impact programs in Colorado Springs, Colorado; Springfield, Illinois; St. Louis, Missouri; Huron and Sioux Falls, South Dakota; San Francisco, Salinas and Bakersfield, California; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Detroit and Grand Rapids, Michigan; and Dania and Miami, Florida.

Through victim awareness classes and victim impact panels, offenders who face transition from incarceration into society are provided with a better understanding of the "domino effects" of crime. The sessions allow them to understand crime hurts not only individual victims, but also the community and the society to which they must return.

Volunteerism has a place in institutions and community-based facilities and is a link for offenders to the community.

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## **I CHOSE YOU**

In September and again in November 1999, the Catholic Renewal Program conducted seminars at the Federal Prison Camp and Federal Correctional Institution in Phoenix, Arizona. The three-day programs were designed to encourage inmates to continue their spiritual development when they return to their homes and families. A total of 68 inmates attend.

The Catholic Renewal Program began approximately 19 years ago with two teams of volunteers. The teams provide seminars in Spanish and English.

The theme of this year's seminars was, "I chose You; You did not choose me."

## **STAFF AND FAMILIES FORM A TEAM**

What comes to mind when you hear Lake Placid? First of all, New York, possibly the Olympics, plenty of snow and some of the world's greatest competitions. Staff of the Federal Correctional Institution (FCI) in Ray Brook, New York, along with their families and friends, have participated in one of these competitions, the IRONMAN USA Lake Placid Triathlon. Ray Brook staff vied for the title of "Best Aid Station" and a cash prize of \$1,000 to be donated to a charity of choice.

On August 15, fifty-eight correctional workers staffed an aid station in the running portion of this prestigious event. Husbands, wives, brothers, sisters, friends and even children as young as eight were among the volunteers from Ray Brook who participated in the 12-hour operation. They handed out beverages, power bars, band-aids, wet sponges, and most importantly, plenty of encouragement to participants from throughout the world.

Staff chose a Hawaiian theme for their aid station since Hawaii would be the site of the next level of competition. Staff wore straw hats, grass skirts, flowered leis and Hawaiian print shirts. The table was adorned with ukuleles, an old fisherman's net, and bowls made of coconut shells filled with tropical fruit. Embracing the international spirit of the competition, Ray Brook staff displayed large, colorful posters inscribed with the words "Good Luck" in all languages spoken in the athletes' native countries. Although Ray Brook did not win, staff vowed to enter the competition for "Best Aid Station" in the 2000 Lake Placid IRONMAN USA Competition.

More than 1,500 athletes from 27 different countries competed in this race to qualify for the National Ironman Triathlon World Championship held in Hawaii in October. The event is recognized as one of eleven licensed IRONMAN races. Participants had to complete a grueling 2.4 mile swim, 112 mile bicycle tour and the 26.2 mile marathon course.

In addition to international exposure on two Canadian and one European network, the event received national television coverage on ESPN.

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## **STAFF VOLUNTEER IN KOMEN RACE FOR THE CURE**

On September 19, staff of the Federal Correctional Institution (FCI) in Sheridan, Oregon, along with their family members and friends participated in the Komen Race for the Cure. The event, held in 98 cities across the country, has become the largest 5K run in the nation. It is a major effort to create greater visibility, sensitivity and benefit for the fight against breast cancer.

The Portland-based event offered a run and a walk. It is considered to be the second largest in the nation, with more than 42,000 participants in Portland alone.

The 18-member team from FCI Sheridan, known as THE CORRECTIVE WALKERS, was coordinated through the efforts of Charlene Bartholomew, UNICOR Accountant.

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## **'TIS THE SEASON OF GIVING**

Although volunteers are nationally recognized in April, this year, Dismas Charities of north Atlanta, a BOP community corrections contractor, chose to honor volunteers just prior to the Christmas holiday.

On December 4, approximately 60 volunteers were recognized in an award ceremony followed by a buffet reception. Each volunteer received a framed certificate of appreciation and an agency pin.

In addition to the individual awards, a formal recognition was given to two churches, St. Ann's Catholic Church of Marietta and Cathedral of the Holy Spirit of Decatur, Georgia. The churches were recognized for their support for and continued involvement in the two Dismas Charities community correctional centers in the Atlanta area.

The giving will continue through December 1999. Children of residents of both centers will be provided with a toy for Christmas, courtesy of the volunteers of St. Anne's. The residents and their families were also treated to Christmas parties, complete with Santa.

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## **FILLING A NEED - A DENTAL ADVENTURE IN SURINAME**

Eight members of FILLING A NEED INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY DENTAL SERVICE ORGANIZATION departed Miami, Florida in April 1999 for two weeks in the rain forest of Suriname in South America. The purpose of the expedition was to provide much needed dental care for the Maroons, also known as "Bushnegroes," along the Suriname and Marowjine Rivers. Each of the participants are dental health professionals and commissioned officers of the U.S. Public Health Service detailed to the BOP. By paying their own travel expenses and taking annual leave, they chose to make a difference by participating in an adventure of a lifetime.

Under the guidance of Dr. Jeff Gaskin of FCI Safford, Arizona, a geographically diverse group of staff participated in this project including Dr. Ken Cho of FCI Schuylkill, Pennsylvania; Dr.

Sam Petrie of FCI Waseca, Minnesota; Dr. Steve Hardman of FCI Three Rivers, Texas; Dr. Dave Clemons of FCI Oxford, Wisconsin; Dr. Melissa Nazareth of FCI Pekin, Illinois; and hygienists, Gloria Urrea of Federal Medical Center (FMC) Devens, Massachusetts, and Sue Fruedenthal of FMC Lexington, Kentucky.

**FILLING A NEED INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY DENTAL SERVICE ORGANIZATION** is not sponsored by the U.S. Public Health Service or the BOP. Consequently, each dental officer is acting in a nonofficial, volunteer capacity. Their services are supported by donations of outdated products from various dental companies. In the maroon communities where these services are provided, dental treatment is far removed from the sterile environment of a clinic. Instead, treatment may be provided in a variety of settings, such as in a house or under a shade tree.

The team was hosted by the Medical Mission of Suriname, under the direction of Dr. John C. de Miranda. The Medical Mission provided food, housing and ground transportation to the areas in which the dental care was provided.

To support this humanitarian effort, the medical team received complimentary cargo fare from Suriname Airlines for the 22 duffle bags (more than 560 pounds) of supplies and personal baggage. Among other areas of support, the Coca-Cola Bottling Company loaned a 25-lb CO-2 compressed gas tank to supplement power for a portable dental unit.

Communication was difficult since there was no language common to all. Persons spoke in Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Yiddish and West African dialects.

The medical team faced intense heat and the presence of diseases such as malaria, dengue and yellow fever, hepatitis and other sicknesses. They fortified themselves against diseases carried by typical rain forest mosquitoes by carrying medications of chloroquine-resistance malarial prophylaxis.

Hot water for showers was unavailable. Since any temperature below 70 degrees is considered a cold wave, natives find no need for hot baths or showers.

Surrounded by the possibility of piranhas, the team made their way through rainforests and submerged rocks, dined by solar power on fish, rice, boiled bananas and "bitter-blad," a green leafy vegetable with a taste similar to spinach. In the evenings, they slept by the pulse of the forest, frogs, night birds and insects. They woke by the call of the village roosters who served as alarm clocks. Their clinic pet was a baby capybara. The capybara is the world's largest rodent; its appearance is similar to a light brown guinea pig with webbed feet and white spots on its back.

Very little is known about the experience of marronage or cimarronaje (escape from slavery). It

is known that maroons are descendants of Africans in Suriname who escaped from slavery in the 1600's and 1700's. Originally from the Gold Coast, the Congo, Nigeria, and Angola, they came to Suriname chained to other fellow human beings in the dark bellies of mammoth slave ships to provide labor for cocoa, rice and coffee plantations. Escaping into the wilderness, maroons challenged the colonial powers and violently resisted enslavement, striking hard at the foundation of the Western Hemisphere's plantation economy.

After hearing of the dental needs in Suriname, it is common for people to ask how they can help. The team's needs include gifts of disposable dental supplies and gloves (large, medium, small), gauze, 27-g long needles and dental anesthetics.

The dental team provided an estimated 700 extractions, 120 sealants and 60 restorations. In addition, 14 nurses were trained and left with supplies to complete treatment following the team's departure.

At least one humanitarian journey is made annually. In April 2000, the volunteer dental mission will travel to the island nation of Sri Lanka. Because of the lack of economic stability in most of the countries visited, the number of volunteers is limited to the extent to which the host country can accommodate the logistical needs of the group. For the next journey, seven of twelve slots are open, two of which will be extended to a photographer and writer.

Persons who would like to know more about the Suriname experience, may visit the Filling A Need's website for information about future trips and stories submitted by several members of the team. Their web address is: [www.isl.net/~samuelj/Welcome.html](http://www.isl.net/~samuelj/Welcome.html).

## **SNAPSHOTS IN VOLUNTEERISM**

### **JUNE 1 - SEPTEMBER 30, 1999**

Total Number of Citizen/Student Volunteers 10,268 Number of volunteers in(BOP) institutions 9448 Number of religious volunteers 8032 Number of volunteers in Community Corrections contract facilities 820 Number of religious volunteers 372 Volunteer Demographics Number of African American volunteers in BOP institutions 2033 Number of Asian volunteers in BOP institutions 126 Number of Caucasian volunteers in BOP institutions 5761 Number of Native American volunteers in BOP institutions 183 BOP Staff Volunteerism Number of partnership schools reported as of April 1999 133 Inmate Volunteerism Number of community service projects reported 97 Number of inmates in community service projects 1,078 Number of community service projects within Occupational Education Program 227 Number of BOP institutions with community service projects 41

## General Facts

An estimated 109 million people -- or about 56% of all American adults volunteered some of their time last year.

The average amount of time each person spent volunteering dropped below 4 hours for the first time since 1997, to 3.5 hours a week.