WORKSHOPS

2024 Massachusetts Conference on Volunteerism
Leading with Authenticity

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Session A: 10:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

A1 Safe Spaces, Strong Bonds: Fostering Inclusivity in Volunteerism

This interactive workshop explores organizational strategies to develop an inclusive culture of trauma-informed approaches within volunteer programs. Through discussions and shared reflections, we’ll explore what fosters belonging (and what inhibits it) within volunteer initiatives. Participants will learn how to bridge gaps in volunteer training and support by exploring psychological safety as a lens to support a range of experiences and backgrounds. By learning new approaches to promote inclusivity within one’s own volunteer organization, participants will walk away with action steps to help make their community a place where every individual feels valued and empowered.

At the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Identify practical strategies that promote a culture of inclusivity among volunteer programs by considering a range of participant backgrounds.
- Reflect on their experiences to explore both successful and challenging aspects of volunteer engagement related to belonging.
- Develop actionable steps to enhance inclusivity and belonging within participants’ own volunteer programs.

**Presenters:** Leah Harrigan, Assistant Director of Education and Training, Silver Lining Mentoring
Alex Parkes, Volunteer Manager, Silver Lining Mentoring

A2 AmeriCorps VISTA and AmeriCorps Seniors: Volunteer Resources for Your Nonprofit

Does your nonprofit or local government need more resources to meet your mission? Learn how AmeriCorps VISTA and AmeriCorps Seniors might be able to help. These AmeriCorps programs provide volunteers that meet community needs. Learn how to partner with an existing program or start a new project!

At the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Better understanding about the AmeriCorps VISTA and AmeriCorps Seniors programs.
- Identify existing AmeriCorps VISTA and AmeriCorps Seniors resources in their communities and know how to contact them to explore possible collaborations or partnerships.
- Apply for future AmeriCorps VISTA and AmeriCorps Seniors resources in their communities.

**Presenters:** Anne Ostberg
A3 Leading Older Volunteers Into Action

A team of aged 65+ volunteers will facilitate this session along with one staff member of AARP MA. The team will share their current volunteerism and what it means to them. Presenters will discuss how to connect with and offer ways to recruit the 65+ population. In addition, the team will address:

- What questions should be asked besides: can I see your resume.
- How to determine what their interests are at this phase of their lives.
- Determining the level of commitment a prospective volunteer may have and how best to put their energy and enthusiasm to productive use in your organization.
- What are the challenges and benefits with the 65+ population.
- Opportunities for reflection and advice on your organization’s use of older volunteers will be provided.

At the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Specifically recruit and connect with an aged 65+ population of skilled, talented, enthusiastic volunteers who are suited to help the organization’s mission.
- Place volunteers in such a way as to best utilize their skills while helping the volunteer to feel needed, important and valuable to the organization.
- Understand that good volunteers need the support of the organization and to know that the organization values the time and talent the volunteer brings to the organization.

Presenters: Polly Mendoza, Community and Volunteer Engagement Director, AARP Massachusetts, Theresa Chaklos, Speakers Bureau Volunteer, AARP Massachusetts, Fran Nase, Speakers Bureau Volunteer, AARP Massachusetts

A4 Member-Driven Legacy Building: Lessons from 25 Years of Service

This session explores how legacy-building opportunities can be strategically implemented in program design and practice. This year, Massachusetts Promise Fellowship, a statewide AmeriCorps Program, turns 25. Together, we will look at the past and current practices that have allowed the program to sustain member-driven change. Workshop attendees will be asked to reflect on the big and small opportunities that allow volunteers and members to leave a trace for those coming behind them. From physical and digital artifacts to peer leadership opportunities and responsive feedback, legacy building is a strategic practice that uplifts the voices, experiences, and knowledge of members and volunteers.

At the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Define legacy building in the context of service and volunteerism.
- Review Massachusetts Promise Fellowship as a case study for member-driven change.
- Examine the benefits, opportunities, and challenges for intentional legacy building amongst volunteers and service-members.

Presenters: Olivia Harris, Program Manager, Massachusetts Promise Fellowship, Anthony “AJ” Pape, Senior Fellow, Massachusetts Promise Fellowship

A5 Where’d Everybody Go?: Improving Volunteer Retention and Training through a Hybrid Model

Hear how the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center navigated shifting its volunteer onboarding and training from fully in person, to fully online, to the best of both--and learn tools and tips for increasing volunteer retention from the very first day of orientation.
At the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Identify ways the initial training/onboarding process can help retain volunteers.
- Apply training methodology to engage volunteers.

Presenters: Megan Mulcahy, Volunteer Service Manager, Boston Area Rape Crisis Center

A6 Shaping Young Volunteer Leaders in Senior Care: From Simon Says to Structured Storytelling

During this interactive session, participants will learn from the experiences of volunteers of all ages who have transitioned from participatory involvement to innovative leadership in senior care. At Hebrew SeniorLife, volunteerism includes the youngest of children to graduate students. Each volunteer comes to us with unique goals and skillsets that we utilize and enhance to match the needs of seniors in our care. Creativity is our guide, and volunteers’ skills grow with time and experience. Our session will explore the process that brings out the best in all who come to our communities with open hearts and willingness to serve.

At the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Redefine leadership development to include volunteers across a full age spectrum.
- Expand practical strategies to recognize volunteer skills and responsibilities and strengthen volunteer leadership in organizations.
- Identify opportunities to strengthen community culture by welcoming unique expressions of leadership from volunteers.

Presenter: Marissa Birne, Program Manager for Youth, Arts and Volunteer Initiatives, Hebrew SeniorLife
Lynda Bussgang, Director, Volunteer, Youth and Community Engagement, Hebrew SeniorLife

A7 Board Excellence: Cultivating Impactful Ambassadors for Successful Fundraising and Development

This workshop dives into the process of developing your board members into key players in advancing your organization's fundraising and development goals. Participants will explore practical strategies, gain insights into fundamental fundraising principles, and refine their communication skills to increase their impact. This workshop aims to equip participants with the knowledge and skills needed to fulfill their roles as effective ambassadors, contributing significantly to the success of your organization's fundraising and development endeavors. The session seeks to create a collaborative and informed board that is aligned with the organization's mission and is dedicated to its long-term sustainability.

At the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Identify and articulate board members' key roles and responsibilities as ambassadors for the organization in fundraising and development efforts.
- Apply practical strategies and communication techniques to effectively convey the organization's mission, impact, and fundraising needs, demonstrating enhanced ambassadorial skills.
- Demonstrate the ability to cultivate and nurture relationships with donors, sponsors, and community partners, applying learned relationship-building strategies to contribute to sustained support for the organization's mission.

Presenter: Melissa Pond, Principal Consultant, Melissa J Pond LLC
B1 Bringing Your Authentic Self to Your Non-profit

How can you support your volunteers and staff in cultivating a growth mindset so that your organization is promoting inclusion and developing a culture of belonging? This session will allow for an interactive discussion about innovative strategies that promote a culture of lifelong learning, nurture volunteer empathy through diversity, encourage vulnerability to assess biased volunteer policies and language, and stimulate community impact.

At the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Demonstrate an understanding of innovative tools that can assess your organization’s current systems that may be inherently biased, exclusive, or inadvertently oppressive towards the communities you serve.
- Identify key components of your own volunteer programs that can be improved to diversify your volunteer base, foster inclusive and equitable outcomes for volunteers and staff, and stimulate community impact.
- Demonstrate an understanding of Citizen Schools innovative school-based volunteer engagement program and its support tools that promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging for staff and volunteers.

Presenters: Victoria Thornton, Director - Volunteer Community, Citizen Schools
Meme Cisse, Manager of Operations, Citizen Schools
Shanay Reed, Manager of Education Development, Citizen Schools

B2 Building Organizational Capacity: Ever Thought About Hosting a Service Member?

Hosting a service member can drastically impact the capacity of your organization to do the work needed to meet your mission. Come and learn all of the details of hosting AmeriCorps or Commonwealth Corps members. This includes understanding the different programs, learning about possible planning grant opportunities and how to apply for members and how to best support members to serve most successfully at your organization.

At the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Understand the different service member programs that exist and identify if service members are a good fit for your organization.
- Know what it takes to support service members at your site and get the most out of their placement with you.
- Understand funding opportunities offered by MSA around service member placement and applying for service member placements themselves.

Presenters: Commonwealth Corps Team & AmeriCorps Team, Massachusetts Service Alliance

B3 Introduction to Disability & Inclusion: Building an Inclusive Volunteer Program

Did you know that one in four people in the U.S. has a disability at any point in time? Statistically speaking, if you serve more than four youths and/or work with more than four volunteers, you are working with people with disabilities in your program. Join Partners for Youth with Disabilities to learn about disability inclusion best practices, promising models, and available resources. Increase your confidence, knowledge and skills and be prepared to take the next step in your organization’s disability inclusion journey.

At the end of the session, participants will be able to...
- Demonstrate understanding of the difference between the social and medical model of disability.
- Identify some of the elements that go into implementing a volunteer program that is inclusive to people with disabilities.
- Apply resources to support disability inclusion work in their programs.

Presenters: Kristin Humphrey, National Disability Mentoring Program Director, Partners for Youth with Disabilities
Courtney Brown, Community Outreach Manager, Partners for Youth with Disabilities

B4 Mobilizing Community to Solve the Refugee Crisis in Massachusetts

Olga's List helps refugees displaced by the war in Ukraine. The organization was born in February of 2023. At that time, we had $0 funding, 5 volunteers, 1 client family (a single mom and her teen daughter) in one town. In October of 2023 we were awarded a three-year, $780,000 federal grant aimed at supporting refugees from Ukraine in Massachusetts. This grant was received through competitive funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. In February 2024, organization serves over 400 individuals across the state with a group of over 100 volunteers of all ages and origin. In this session you will learn about our journey, our methodology of mobilizing community to respond to a migration crisis, our ability to raise funds and most importantly, of how a small group of people who rose to the occasion to save people who suffer from war became an organization.

At the end of the session, participants will be able to...
- Learn about a particular case of Ukrainian migration due to war.
- Understand the process of community mobilizing for a cause.
- Apply lessons learned to their own efforts to build community support.

Presenters: Olga Yulikova, Founder and Executive Director, Olga’s List, Inc.
Anastasiia Hernandez, Director of Case Management, Olga’s List, Inc.

B5 Revolutionize Impact: Create Unforgettable Volunteering Experiences

Transform your volunteers’ work into a deeply rewarding experience in our workshop, Revolutionize Impact: Create Unforgettable Volunteering Experiences! Learn how to provide opportunities that align with your volunteers’ passions, leverage their unique skills, and set impactful goals. We’ll share strategies for fostering a sense of community among volunteers, ensuring their efforts not only contribute to meaningful change but also enrich their personal and professional growth. Whether you’re a new volunteer leader or an experienced administrator of volunteer programs, join us to unlock the full potential of your volunteers’ experiences, making them more fulfilling and impactful for both them and the communities you serve.

At the end of the session, participants will be able to...
- Participants will be able to identify the transformative power of purpose in volunteering by articulating key concepts discussed during the workshop.
- Participants will be able to articulate personalized strategies for impactful volunteering by identifying and reflecting on their individual passions and skills.
- Participants will be able to collaborate with peers in small group activities to generate and share innovative ideas for creating meaningful change in their volunteer roles.

Presenters: Natalie Matthews, Community Engagement Coordinator, Northeastern University
Carolyn Jacob, Community Service Programmer, Northeastern University
The Future of Volunteerism: Quality, Inclusivity & Practice

This workshop session will share experiences and up-to-date information about national volunteer trends, a case study of LifePath’s Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging engagement and activity, and learnings as a nationally accredited Service Enterprise (July 2024).

At the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Understand more and think about what is happening in the field of volunteerism in the U.S. with a particular emphasis on rural Western MA.
- Apply one or more DEIB engagement practices to their volunteer efforts.
- Share about why quality volunteer programming and becoming accredited as a Service Enterprise matters.

Presenter: Susan White, Associate Director of Volunteer Resources & DEIB Project Lead, LifePath
Linda Goldstein, Volunteer, LifePath

Volunteer Advancement: How To Advance Engagement and Leverage Funding for Volunteerism through Technology

Many nonprofits consider volunteers as direct capacity builders—delivering services to their constituents and expanding an organization’s mission to their local communities. What many organizations do not realize is that volunteers can often be their strongest advocates for their organization and be leveraged as funders when they are effectively engaged. Moreover, volunteer data and impact—when collected and reported on effectively, can help leverage funding to expand programs. This workshop is designed to present current trends and research in volunteer engagement, compelling data that will appeal to volunteers, and how technology can be utilized to drive this engagement.

At the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Articulate the impact of their volunteer program.
- Understand best practices in volunteer engagement.
- Understand how technology can be utilized to track and report on volunteer data.

Presenters: Chris Woods, Client Strategy Lead, Golden Volunteer