

The following chapter was taken from an operations manual used by the Youth Volunteer Corps.

Chapter 9

Reflection, Leadership & Recognition

“Giving is the only flight in space permitted to human beings.”

-Anais Nin

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Reflection, Leadership and Recognition

The Youth Volunteer Corps is designed to integrate experiential learning with community service. This process involves youth in identifying community needs, helping them understand the implications of their volunteer activity and leading them to action. By equipping youth with this knowledge, YVC endeavors to increase Youth Volunteers' self-esteem as they mature into caring, community-minded adults.

This process is evident as YVC programs evolve youth participation from community service to community problem solving. By involving youth in the operation of programs, youth move from clients to contributors.

APPLICABLE PROGRAM STANDARDS

Establish an integrated education and reflection process for participants

Requirements

- Provide orientation, training and reflection for each service project
- Provide an on-going and progressive learning process for long-term projects
- Use the learning component to identify community needs, help Youth Volunteer understand the implication of volunteer activity and lead them to action

Recommendations

- Reinforce curricula objectives through an integrated service-learning component
- Use agency personnel, educators, and Team Leaders to facilitate orientation and training
- Train Team Leaders to serve as the primary facilitator of the learning and reflection components

Provide leadership opportunities for Youth Volunteers

Requirements

- Offer Youth Volunteers opportunities for active participation in program governance, management and project development
- Offer Youth Volunteers opportunities for promotion through the program

Recommendations

- Organize a Youth Council or place Youth Volunteers on the YVC Advisory Council
- Encourage participation by Youth Volunteers in YVC's annual International Conference
- Develop an alumni program to keep past Youth Volunteers aware of program developments and channel them toward other service experiences
- Recruit Team Leaders from among past Youth Volunteers



Reflection

Community service is recognized as a powerful form of citizenship education that imbues young people with an ethic of social responsibility carried into adulthood.¹ Indeed, developing a lifetime ethic of service is primary to the mission of the Youth Volunteer Corps.

A key component of the learning process is reflection. When incorporated into project design, reflection involves youth in a close examination of their service experience. Discussion, journal writing, arts and crafts, skits and other activities allow youth to focus on their experience in the YVC. Facilitators and Team Leaders then guide youth through higher level thinking skills to examine their experience as it relates to personal and community development.

A Definition:

*Reflection is a guided process that leads volunteers through a careful examination of their service experience to help them realize the deeper and broader meaning and impact of their community service activities.*²

Reflection Design:

According to Catherine Rolzinski in "Youth Service and Reflection,"³ methods to facilitate effective reflection components should be as creative and varied as possible. Logistical considerations such as the time and place are important to planning activities that will help guide young people in reflecting about their service experience. Reflection times should be scheduled at regular intervals and as close to the actual service activity as possible.

YVC Program Directors have found that it is helpful to determine in advance how the service experience will be connected with the reflection component. They also stress that reflection should not merely be a process at the end of the activity, but that Team Leaders/project supervisors look for teachable moments throughout the service activity.

Reflection can be enhanced through what Catherine Rolzinski calls "inner dimensions of searching" and "outer expressions of sharing." 'Inner reflection' can be accomplished through journal writing and other tangible forms of expression. 'Outer expression' can

include daily Team Talks with planned, structured in-depth discussions scheduled at least once a week. Whatever the activity, it must be engaging, guided and adapted to the particular interests of the Youth Volunteers.

Reflection activities and methods can and should vary. According to Catherine Rolzinski, "What is important to maintain is the view that reflection is an essential component to quality youth service programs and that there is a serious commitment to structuring the time, resources and skill development critical to a well-developed reflection component."

Her research of the Magic Me program in Baltimore, MA identifies the information covered in each reflection interaction.

WARM-UP Recalling events, identifying successes and failures

WORK-OUT Analysis, identifying motives, cause and effect
Comprehension and understanding
Evaluation, forming judgments and solutions
Application, improving our service

STRETCHING Summarizing the discussion and plans
Examining group actions and responsibilities
and individual actions and responsibilities

This process outlined by Magic Me divides the reflection process into four steps:

FACTS What did we do?

IMPLICATIONS What made things happen the way they did?

EVALUATION What are your thoughts and feelings about these issues?

SOLUTIONS So what is to be done now?

The "*What, So What, Now What?*" questioning process fits naturally into these formats and can be incorporated into a wide variety of activities that can be utilized throughout summer and school year service projects and service learning activities.

Critical Elements of the Reflective Component:

Two things are required to give meaning to reflective activities. First, they should be related to the real experiences of the students, not abstract musing on hypothetical experiences. The second is that as much care be given to the quality and significance of reflective activities as is given to the service activities themselves.⁴

Specifically, the best reflective activities:

1. Help young people make a real contribution to individuals they are serving;
2. Meet genuine needs in the reflective component, particularly the needs of the youth participants;
3. Challenge students to stretch, to perform at higher levels than they have previously;
4. Encourage students to participate actively in their own learning rather than cast them as passive listeners or recipients of information;
5. Relate theory to practice, to test the value of knowledge and to sense what more must be learned;
6. Develop a sense of community, which comes from shared goals and work on communal tasks;
7. Demonstrate a partnership between youth and adults, the school and the community;
8. Are both structured and flexible, having a clear sense of direction, yet responsive to new situations;
9. Promote genuine maturity both in what is reflected on and the roles participants assume;
10. Involve decision making on what will be considered, and in what way;
11. Have real consequences; the reflection is purposeful, the outcomes make a difference to someone.

Resources:

*****The Team Leader Handbook includes many education and reflection activities.**

Resources such as Silver Bullets and Games Trainers Play and others provide additional experiential learning exercises.⁵ YVCA Field Organizers, local practitioners and educators also can provide guidance to facilitate education and reflection techniques.

Reflection and Education



Reflection: A guided process that leads volunteers through a careful examination of their service experience to help them realize the deeper and broader meaning and impact of their community service activities.

"So what does reflection do? It changes people, it creates questions, it provokes growth. In fact, none of us would ever change the way we look at things unless we reflected.

"Young people who become involved in service programs often have a deep hunger for meaning and experience, and all of us have seen how their lives can be turned around by service work. Reflection plays a huge part in this...service action does not automatically become service attitude. The depth of reflection determines the quality of the attitude and the quality of action."

David Sawyer
Berea College, KT

More precisely, reflection is a process that helps volunteers address three questions:

What? Examining the local need.

So What? Examining the personal meaning.

Now What? Examining citizenship in the community/world.

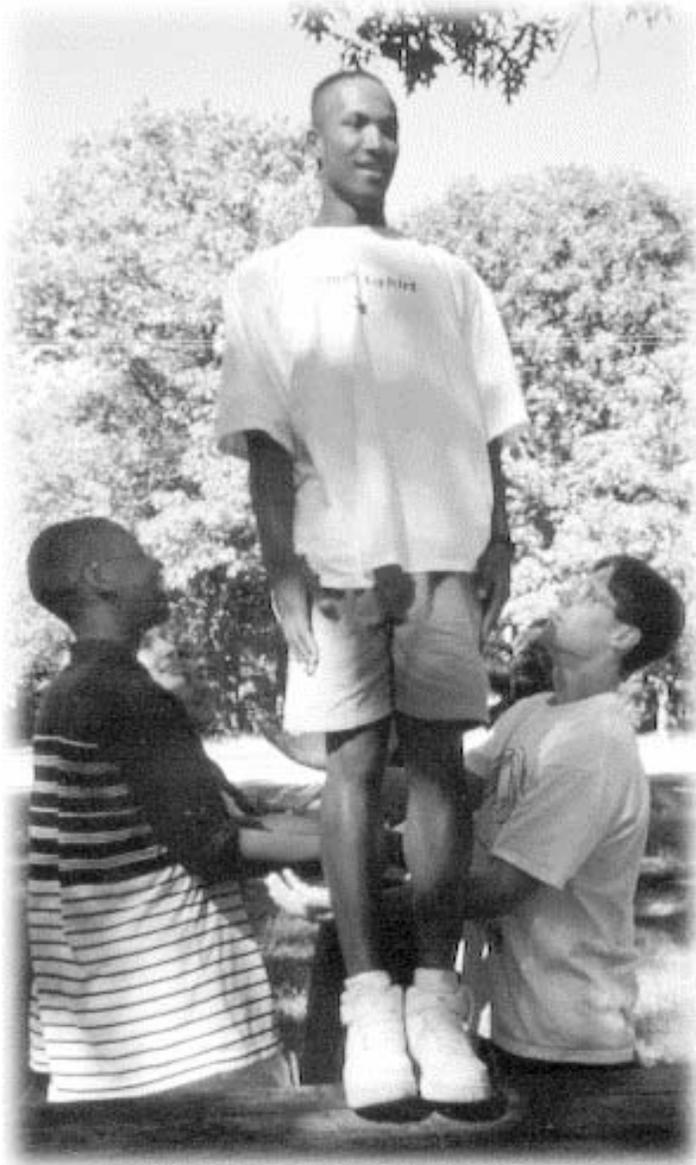
The purpose of the "**What?**" of youth service is to help youth develop a better understanding of the service issues being addressed in their local community through the YVC. For example, what are the specific needs or unique aspects of the problems affecting the environment, the homeless, the elderly, and the disabled in your community? What are the extent of the problems? What local programs are in place to help these problems? How do different people in the community feel about these pressing social issues?

"So What?" involves the realization that a sense of caring comes from giving -- a personal satisfaction of helping others. How am I making a difference? How did I feel about this social issue before I became personally involved with it? How do I feel when I'm participating in the YVC? How have I changed since I began volunteering? What makes me want to continue to volunteer?

Citizenship comes from "**Now What?**" The combination of a deeper understanding about community problems and a personal sense of caring prompts civic concern. Questions have a broader social context. What city, state, and federal policies relate to the social issue I am addressing? What are my reactions to these policies, laws or regulations? How can I create change? How do these issues affect not only my immediate community, but the global community as well?

(Excerpts from "Youth Service and Reflection" by Catherine A. Rolzinski for YVCA)

A Range of Activities



An activity conducted with a group of youth volunteers may fall into **one or more** of the categories below. A simple icebreaker of passing a ball around a circle and saying names becomes a team-building game if the team leader challenges the group to complete the circuit in a certain amount of time. Likewise, reflection moves into service-learning as volunteers may want to learn more about poverty after serving a meal to the homeless.

The challenge for a Team Leader, AmeriCorps member, Program Director, or other group leader, is to know about each of these activities, to be able to combine elements of more than one in an activity, and to seek to push the learning and growth which are both experienced and realized by the youth volunteers.

This document was contributed by Youth Volunteer Corps (YVCA). Based in Kansas City, YVCA is a National Direct program dedicated to creating and increasing volunteer opportunities that enrich America's youth, address community needs and develop a lifetime commitment to service.

ICEBREAKERS:

Typically brief, fun activities designed to help “break the ice” and have a group of strangers get to know and feel more comfortable with one another. These activities can be plain fun and silly. Name games are examples of favorite icebreakers.

TEAM-BUILDING AND INITIATIVE GAMES:

These activities tend to be more challenging than simple icebreakers. Often there is a problem or challenge presented to the group and they need to creatively work together for a solution. These type of activities also may involve increasing levels of risk (sharing personal space, trusting someone else to hold you up, etc.) and pushing personal and group limits.

REFLECTION ACTIVITIES:

Reflection is a guided process that leads volunteers through a careful examination of their service experience to help them realize the deeper and broader meaning and impact of their community service activities. The focus is upon the service experience and its impact upon oneself and the community.

SERVICE-LEARNING:

Service learning "is a teaching/learning method that connects meaningful community service experiences with academic learning, personal growth and civic responsibility." Service-learning activities are often connected directly with the curriculum of a specific class in school, but a strong community-based program can also use service-learning as a method for learning and growth.

ENRICH, EXTEND—ENRICH, EXTEND—ENRICH, EXTEND

Any activity can be enriched or extended to deepen or lengthen the learning experience for participants. Challenge yourself and your youth volunteers to make it the fullest activity possible!

Another Look at Reflection



Reflection can also be looked at as a critical element and step in the process of thoughtful and committed human action. A group of researchers and practitioners are putting together a model to describe this action which would include the following four steps:

1) INSPIRATION

This is where one gets inspired. The sources of inspiration are pretty infinite and varied amongst people. Often the inspiration for volunteering or doing community service arises from some spiritual or religious source for the individual. One may need to go looking for inspiration, or at least be open to being inspired from somewhere, somehow.

2) MOTIVATION

The bridge between inspiration and action. Ideally one would go directly between inspiration and action; unfortunately it does not often happen that way. We may need an additional push, lighting of the fire under our feet, or other form of initiator to get us into action. A youth who calls the YVC program to find out about volunteering may have been *inspired* to serve, but they may also need additional encouragement, support, and motivation from Program Directors and Team Leaders to take and make the leap into action!

3) ACTION

This the service, the actual volunteering, the meat of our work, the real kahuna, getting down and dirty and doing what the necessary work to make a positive difference in our communities. It may be direct or indirect service. Ideally, we want to be efficient and effective in our action. It may take a lot of inspiration and motivation, not to mention preparation and groundwork, before the actual service takes place, but it is important to remember that that prep work is necessary to make this action as successful as possible.

4) REFLECTION

A lot is said about this already in this chapter. But it is very important to see how Reflection fits into this cycle. It needs to include looking back at the Action and

discussing the successes and challenges of that work and what needs to be done next as a result of the volunteering. Reflection also needs to be a preparation to going forward into the stage of Inspiration again. This may mean some time for listening, for silence, for preparing ourselves to be inspired again and whatever it may take to allow for that Inspiration to come.

This look at Reflection is graciously borrowed from George Kostveit Gabriel and the Chien Foundation of Oslo, Norway.



Ideas for Reflection Activities

--Ways to process, share, and explore the service experience--

SPEAKING

One-On-One Talk

- Team leader with youth volunteer

- YV to YV

Small Group Discussion

Full Team Meetings

- . • Talk Arounds
- . • Council Gathering
- . • Fish Bowl Informal Discussion (in the van, over lunch, during break) Oral Report to Agency Staff or Community Representatives Discussion with Clients Interview or Take Oral Histories of Clients Discussion with experts in the field Testimony before the Board of Directors Press Conference Record an Oral Account of the Project

WRITING

Daily Individual Journals

- With assignments or freewrites Team Journal Poems to Share (post at agency, read to other teams) A Guide for Future YVC Teams Press Release Youth Volunteer Resumes Evaluation of the Program Newsletter Article A Posting on the Internet A Final Report on the Project

Letters To...

- . • The Newspaper
- . • Elected Representatives

- Other YVC Sites
- Parents (of YV's or of clients served)
- The Host Agency

MULTIMEDIA

A Team Scrapbook from the Project Photo Essay Painting or Drawing Impressions of the Project

- Poster, chalk drawing or other public art display Collage or Group Sculpture Song Written About the Experience Skit Performed About the Project
- For Agency Staff, Board, Clients, or Community Groups
- To be performed at summer celebration Slide Show Video

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Gather Information About An Issue Plan Parts of Next Week's Project Role Play Games-
-How Would You Respond in a Client's Situation Simulation Games Advocacy: The Next Step After Direct Service Plan the Best Way to do Next Year's Project: Give Report to P.D. Problem Solve for the Agency

A Group Reflection Technique:

The Council Process



We trace the origins of our "Council Process" to classical Greek culture, the peoples of the plains and southwestern deserts, and the League of the Iroquois, which had a powerful influence on the beginnings of our present democratic governmental system. In recent years, Council is again being used in settings as diverse as intentional communities, schools, families and the business world as a way to explore possibilities and reflect on council members' experiences and differences, without the pressure for agreement or consensus.

In the YVC of Corvallis, Oregon, we use Councils to enhance the team experience, to facilitate reflection, and to foster a critical sense of belonging. It cuts through “appearances,” promotes participation, problem-solving, and teaches conflict-resolution skills by creating a safe container for the conflict.

As we sit together on the ground (those who are uncomfortable on the ground should be invited to sit in a chair) and pass the talking stick, the team reflects on their experience. (The “stick” does not have to be a stick. It can be any object chosen by the team: a rock, drawing, gem, volleyball, anything that has special meaning.) Passing the talking stick encourages deep listening. It nurtures tolerance, patience, empathy and appreciation for individual differences.

Most groups adopt a few rules to support the process, such as speak briefly, from the heart, no put-downs, no cross-talk, and having the right to pass without speaking.

At the beginning of Council, the leader invites the members to dedicate the Council. They can dedicate to a person, a human quality or experience such as “perseverance” or “love,” or to an animal, tree, or place.

Council can have a theme: tell a story about a time when you said good-bye. Or, it can be about the project the team just finished, the satisfactions and frustrations of it, or any conflicts it brought up within or between members.

And be sure to think with the members about the issue of confidentiality. Remember: this is a powerful educational tool. Don’t be in a hurry.

[Contributed By: Abby Terris, YVC of Benton County, Corvallis, Oregon, and based on the Mysteries Program.]



Reflection Activity: Group Reading

Goal: To share our reflections on service to ourselves and/or an audience.

Organize your team to do a group reflection reading. This reading may be performed for the team itself, for clients of the agency, for other YV’s and parents at a volunteer celebration, or for members of the community-at-large.

Materials Needed:

A collection of short readings from a few sentences to several paragraphs each. These readings may include journal excerpts from your team or another team who has carried out a service project. It may also include poems, brief stories, comments gathered from clients you have worked with, overheard remarks, inspirational pieces, whatever fine piece of writing or language that you can gather.

Preparation:

Put together and organize the readings so that there is some “flow” in their presentation to the audience. Divide up the team members with the readings so everyone has a chance to read at least one. Alternate readers who stand up at a microphone or in front of the room one at a time. Allow a few moments of silence between readings to allow the meaning to sink deep. Practice reading aloud and giving feedback to one another.

Performance:

Ask the audience to focus on the words and how you say them. Be dynamic in your reading without being overly dramatic. Relax, read patiently, and have fun.

Some suggested resources for the readings: Yourself, other youth volunteers, clients from your agency, staff, Maya Angelou, Alice Walker, Robert Frost, Robert Fulghum, Marge Piercy, Martin Luther King Jr., John F. Kennedy, Bob Dylan, Aesop, Richard Bach, anonymous, Lois Lowry, Robert Coles, ee cummings....

Other Options:

- Include acting, performing, or miming during the reading
- Scatter the readers throughout the audience and have them “pop up” and read when it is their turn
- Include songs, or create songs out of the words, teach a refrain to the audience

This Group Reading idea is borrowed from the Y.E.S. Ambassadors reading at the 1996 Points of Light Foundation National and Community Service Conference.



Reflection Activity: Youth Volunteer Resume

Goal: For YV's to create resumes which highlight their volunteer project(s) and the skills and experiences that they learned. To have a document that they can use in the future for job-searching.

The idea is to do a reflection activity with YV's **where you work together to create a resume for them.** This resume would focus on their volunteer work and especially on their service with your team during the summer.

A YOUTH VOLUNTEER RESUME could include:

- Name of Project, dates, host agency, and number of hours served.
- What work was accomplished by the project (i.e. two murals painted, twenty-seven summer campers were lead in basketball, how to write and edit a guide, etc.)
- What skills did you learn (i.e. how to supervise younger kids, how to work a powerhose, working as a team, etc.)
- What other experiences or highlights happened (i.e. special awards from the host agency, comment from their team leader, team-building exercises).

When you are finished, they have this **Resume** to take with them and use next school year or next summer when applying for jobs. Plus it gets them to think critically about what they are learning on your project and how it can be useful for them.

Leadership

"To be a successful empowerer, you must



first be an effective leader yourself.

Then you need to teach others to be effective leaders...Effective leaders have vision. Leaders are able to share their vision and can persuade others to take them on as their own."⁶

These words of inspiration apply to Program Directors as well. The following are questions Program Directors and other program leaders can reflect upon as they develop an effective leadership component for Youth Volunteers.⁷

EMPOWERMENT: Questions to ask myself

SIGNIFICANCE - Making a difference for the organization and the world.

Am I letting the volunteers make a difference for our organization?

Are they making a difference for the outside world?

Is this a significant opportunity?

COMPETENCE - Providing learning and training opportunities.

Am I providing the necessary training and orientation?

Am I providing on-going learning opportunities?

Am I paving the way for success, without doing all the work?

Have I set parameters that everyone feels comfortable with?

COMMUNITY - Reliance on the team to fulfill a common cause.

Are the volunteers working as a team to fulfill their goal?

Have I set up a structure where volunteers are in charge (or have a role in governance)?

Have I created a trusting atmosphere and caring relationships?

FUN

Are the youth having fun?

Am I having fun?

Leadership Opportunities for Volunteers:

See also “Youth Volunteer Involvement in the Project Planning Process” in Chapter 5. It includes a description of numerous and important ways to involve youth in your program.

The Youth Volunteer Corps offers a number of leadership opportunities for volunteers available at both local and national levels. The list below describes just a few of the opportunities offered through the YVC.

VOLUNTEER
<p>Local Project Leaders or Assistants Youth Advisory Council YAC Committee Leadership YAC Executive Committee Leadership Membership on the (adult) Advisory Council Membership on the Sponsoring Organization's Board of Directors</p> <p>National National Conference Delegate Special Project Representative National Office Intern National Board of Directors</p> <p>Volunteers have become Assistant Team Leaders, training to become paid Team Leaders, who have become paid Assistant and Full Program Directors.</p>

It is the goal of YVCA that Youth Volunteers will someday become national YVCA staff.



Youth Advisory Council

YVC programs organize Youth Advisory Councils (YAC) to provide young people with leadership development opportunities that enhance their service experiences. The YAC is an essential element to increase youth ownership in the program and demonstrate the role of young people in community problem solving. According to "The Role of Youth in the Governance of Youth Service Programs,"⁸ "Youth involvement in governance can greatly affect program success. When youth are involved from the beginning, the mission of the program is more likely to reflect their interests."

Responsibilities:

YAC's primary responsibility is to represent and network with the community's youth. Some YACs work directly with the Program Director and YVC (adult) Advisory Council to establish program policy. Other YACs address issues related to recruitment and retention, project design and selection, promotion and recognition, and other areas of program operation.

It is critical to define the role young people will have and provide appropriate training accordingly. Says "The Role of Youth," "Whatever the structure, one of the most important, and often overlooked, factors necessary for successful youth governance is that youth must be given genuine responsibility...As young people develop skills and learn more about the program, their roles and responsibilities can be expanded."

Membership:

YAC members should, of course, be active volunteers. Some programs have specific requirements for school year and summer participation to achieve and maintain membership.

Diversity of schools, gender, cultural background and age is important so that all Youth Volunteers are represented and networking abilities are strong.

According to "The Role of Youth", by involving a cross-age group of young people in the leadership roles, participants learn and teach simultaneously...Students chosen must be credible to both adults and youth involved in the program. These students should reflect the diversity of the program to maximize the range of opinions and ideas and to encourage other youth throughout the program to strive to become involved at the leadership level."

Training:

"The greatest barrier to participation may be a lack of confidence on the part of the young people themselves," according to "Engaging Young People as Leaders of Youth Service Program". "If they have never been asked to lead, they may fear or even resist leadership. Creating an atmosphere of trust and support is essential. Team building initiative games are



in this role."⁹

indispensable

Special effort should be given to providing young people with skills training, teaching both leadership skills and program operation techniques. Training can review youths' role in program management, committee structures and operations (including Robert's Rules of Order) and decision-making skills. Speakers can be brought in to discuss particular areas of expertise, such as journalists discussing press relations or development directors talking about fundraising.

Working with Adults:

The YVC program in Quad Cities, IA/IL, provides an additional element to helping teach volunteers leadership qualities. An adult YVC Advisory Council member is assigned to each youth committee to share expertise and help guide the committee. This inter-related dependence assures that each group's view point is expressed and fully represented to each other.

According to "The Role of Youth", "Working with adults, young people learn how to make organizations work, they learn how to run meetings, how to organize committees

and how to work as a part of a group. They also learn the importance of timeliness and attentiveness to details as they practice decision-making and cooperation...

"Young people improve their communication skills, gain confidence in public speaking, and experience an increased understanding of the issues facing adults. Most importantly, they develop greater confidence and ability to make responsible and reasoned decisions based on an understanding of the consequences of these actions...

"One benefit for the interaction between youth and adults is that both groups gain from the exchange. Youth help adults who may fail to understand their perspective on current trends and issues."

The YAC can powerfully demonstrate the benefits of youth participation in program governance to other local community organizations. Efforts should be taken to get YAC members on various community boards. Members of the YVC Advisory Council can provide ideas on local organizations that may be interested in having youth representation. Agencies that host YVC projects can also be contacted about adding youth representation to their governing councils and Boards.

Volunteers can learn new skills, strengths and perspectives as participants in the governance of programs:¹⁰

Responsibility and accountability Peer-to-peer leadership skills
Communication skills Organizations skills, including:
Understanding working structures
Facilitating meetings
Developing committees
Working in groups Increased self-esteem Working
with adults Creative problem solving

Nomination:

Youth Volunteers are generally nominated for membership by the Program Director, Team Leaders and YAC members. An application from the nominee and letters of recommendation from Team Leaders and teachers are generally required (see sample). An interview by the nominating committee, executive committee or other council group is also standard practice. A vote is then taken by the council to determine membership of the nominee.

During program start-up, schools and other community youth agencies can be contacted for referrals of potential members. Members of the YVC Advisory Council can also suggest possible candidates.

Officers:

There have been two forms of council officer structure - a chair/co-chair structure or

more traditional structure with a council chair, secretary and treasurer. Officers can be selected by election or appointed by the Program Director.

With the chair/co-chair structure, the chair is responsible for running meetings, assigning committees and meeting with the Program Director and co-chair to set meeting agendas.

A more formal structure has been used by the Quad Cities program, with officers titled Speaker (the chairperson role), treasurer and secretary/historian. A sample of the program's By-Laws follows in this chapter. It is important to note that the Quad Cities YVC calls its youth council a Board of Directors. The Sponsoring Organization does have a Board of Directors and the YVC program also has an adult Advisory Council. Please refer to notations following the By-Laws of the Quad Cities program for further clarification on the roles of youth councils, adult councils and Boards of Directors.

Committees:

Committees can be organized to address recruitment and retention, project design and selection, promotion and recognition, and other areas of program operation.

An important note about the responsibilities of advisory councils: An advisory council provides guidance to the program, but it usually does not formally govern the program, supervise staff or have financial oversight. Those responsibilities reside with the staff and board of directors of the sponsoring agency.

The YVC Advisory Council is charged with program planning and development, fundraising, program evaluation and community relations. In the areas where responsibilities overlap, it may be practical for committees of the Advisory Council and YAC to meet jointly. It is important to stress, however, that the Advisory Council is primarily responsible for overarching issues, particularly policy setting and fundraising. Some programs do, however, have youth more actively involved in these roles than others.

It is also important to note here that youth members of the YVC (adult) Advisory Council should be YAC members.

Meetings:

Most programs have their YACs meet every other week. Logistics may not permit councils to meet as frequently. YAC committees could meet before or during the council meeting to ease transportation needs.



An annual retreat (possibly held jointly with the Advisory Council) should be held to orient new members and provide returning members with an opportunity to refocus on the goals of both the YAC and the YVC. The budget and in-kind resources will determine how elaborate the event can be. Ideally, the retreat should take place in a different location from where regular meetings are held. Topics to cover include committee tasks and group development. Goals can include getting acquainted, determining the relationship with the Advisory Council and group dynamics. Tasks to accomplish can include reflection on the past year's activities and goal setting for both the YAC and YVC for the coming year.

The Quad Cities, IA/IL programs holds an annual retreat and uses the national goals developed at the national conference as benchmarks for local goal setting.



Nominee Application Form for the Youth Volunteer Corps Youth Advisory Council

(Please type or print neatly.) Name

_____ Date: _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number _____ Date of Birth _____

School _____ Grade (currently in) _____

Email _____ Name of Parent or Guardian

Please submit a 1-2 page essay addressing the following:

1. 1. Describe why you are interested in being on the YVC Youth Advisory Council.
2. 2. Describe your volunteer activities and leadership roles with the Youth Volunteer Corps.
3. 3. Describe any other past or current volunteer/community service activities through school, church, synagogue or other organizations. You may also tell how this service has impacted you and why you serve. List here any other activities or work experience you would like to include.

Include a letter of recommendation from a teacher or other adult familiar with your skills and qualifications.

Please return this form with your essay and letter of recommendation to:

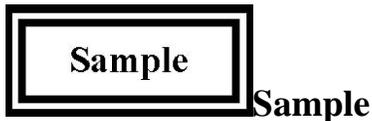
Office Use:

Nominated by:

Phone:

Action taken by council:

Nominee contacted by letter announcing decision (sent):



Nomination Form for the Youth Volunteer Corps Youth Advisory Council

(Please type or print neatly.) Nominating Person

(contact person): _____ Nominating

Agency/Organization (if applicable) _____

Address

Phone: _____

Date: _____ Person being nominated:

Statement by nominating person supporting this nomination: (Nominee's personal qualifications, activities, experience with nominee, strengths this nominee will add to the organization, etc. Please use additional sheets if necessary.)

Please return nomination form to:

Office Use:

Nominee Application Form returned:

Action taken by council:

Nominating person contacted by letter announcing decision (sent):



**Evaluation Form for Nominations to the Youth Volunteer Corps
Youth Advisory Council**

Name of Nominee

_____ Name of

Nomination Reviewer: _____

On a scale of 1-5, with five being the highest, please rate this nominee in the following areas:

Participation in the Youth Volunteer Corps _____

Demonstrated leadership capabilities _____ Demonstrated
written communication skills _____ Demonstrated oral
communication skills _____ Potential to affect the YVC
program _____ Potential to be affected by involvement _____

Comments:



Vero Beach Family YMCA Youth Volunteer Corps Guidelines Youth Advisory Council

Purpose:

Linking the voices of youth to solve problems in the community.

Member Qualifications:

1. 1. Summer project experience (complete a team leader and project evaluation).
2. 2. Team leader recommendation.
3. 3. Teacher recommendation.
4. 4. Program coordinator recommendation.
5. 5. Nominating committee consensus.
6. 6. Eager and enthusiastic.

Composition:

1. 1. Minimum of nine (9) members and no more than twenty (20).
2. 2. Election each year.
3. 3. Cross section of school representation.
4. 4. Cross section of age, gender, ethnic, racial and socio-economic representation.

Officers:

1. 1. Program Director will assign chair and co-chair.
2. 2. Chair runs meetings and assigns committees.
3. 3. Co-chair sits in for absent chairman and helps with running the meetings.

Meeting Time and Place:

1. 1. Bimonthly
2. 2. Meet at YMCA office.
3. 3. Meeting time to be announced. (Currently 1st and 3rd Wednesday, 3-4 p.m.)

Sample

Sample

**Vero Beach Family
YMCA
Youth Volunteer
Corps
Youth Advisory
Council
Objectives**

1. 1. Discuss community problems that Youth Volunteers can help solve.
2. 2. Discuss summer project ideas.
3. 3. Discuss school year projects.
4. 4. Discuss methods of recruiting Youth Volunteers for summer and school-year projects.
5. 5. Review recruiting tools for school presentations, (i.e., brochure, video, other YVs).
6. 6. Use last year's Youth Volunteers to present recruiting program to students in their school.
7. 7. Pursue teacher endorsements of program, especially male coaches to induce male participation in the YVC program.
8. 8. Suggest improvements of summer program, i.e, training, orientation, reflection time, recognition event, etc.
9. 9. Determine T-shirt slogan each year.
10. 10. Develop community awareness about YVC, i.e., write newsletter articles, develop picture boards, speak to groups.
11. 11. Select at least two representatives to attend YMCA Board meetings.
12. 12. Initiate action to encourage Youth Advisory Council members to serve on local community agency boards throughout the community.

Sample

Sample

**Youth
Volunteer
Corps of the
Quad Cities
Area, IA/IL
Youth Advisory
Council**

DRAFT--YVC NATIONAL GOALS

(determined by youth attending the YVC International Conference)

To address world problems

To develop leadership roles among youth

To recruit a diverse group of youth to participate in the program

YVC-QCA GOALS

To enhance the self-esteem of youth through service

To educate the community about the capabilities of young people

To promote community awareness among youth

To cultivate competencies in leadership, decision making, problem solving and group

process skills among youth

YVC-QCA Objectives and Strategies

Membership:

Increase membership by 50%

- .- Conduct recruitment events (social, dance, picnic, etc.)
- .- Conduct recruitment campaign concentrating on schools (in cooperation with P.R.

Committee)

Retain current membership

- Distribute newsletter (in cooperation with P.R.) include membership column and volunteer spotlight (volunteer of the month)
- Provide recognition plan through tally cards

Enhance diversity of membership

Recruit members for summer and school year projects

Public Relations:

To promote YVC in schools (in cooperation with Membership committee)

- Word of mouth
- Youth presentations in schools (contact teachers, counselors, clubs and organizations)
- Have Sign-Up tables at schools during lunch
- Place articles in school newspapers
- .- Utilize malls and other businesses`
- .- Utilize local events such as parades, fairs, etc.

.-Gain media coverage (radio, newspaper and TV)

Promote YVC in the community

- .- Utilize United Way publications
- .- Utilize malls and other businesses
- .- Utilize local events such as parades, fairs, etc.

- .-Gain media coverage (radio, newspaper and TV)
- Produce newsletter
- Increase interaction with YVCA (National)
- Conduct more social events (in cooperation with Membership committee)

Send out news releases on projects, fund-raisers and other events (in cooperation with other committees)

Fundraising:

Raise funds

- Hold four fund raisers per year
- Brain storm with board for fund-raiser ideas, conduct a survey

Develop a budget

- Assess how much was spent last year
- Assess how much is needed by each committee Develop an allocations procedure Donate funds from one project to a world problem

Projects:

Provide a variety of projects to serve a variety of world and community needs

- Become aware of problems in the community
- Create a file of clippings of community needs
- Select projects on both sides of the river Select project captain to assist in execution of projects
- Produce information sheet on projects to send to corps members Promote projects in community (in cooperation with P.R.) Prepare projects column for newsletter



Youth Volunteer Corps

of the Greater Quad Cities Area, IA/IL By-Laws

Adopted March 1991 Revised November 1991 Revised January 1992

ARTICLE I - NAME

- A. The name of the organization shall be the Youth Volunteer Corps of the Greater Quad Cities Area (hereafter YVC-QCA)

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

- A. The purpose of the YVC-QCA, which is co-sponsored by the Volunteer Center of the Greater Quad Cities and the United Way of the Quad Cities Area, is to promote volunteerism among youth in

the community.

ARTICLE III - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section A Composition:

1. 1. The Board of Directors of the YVC-QCA shall consist of no fewer than 20 and no more than 35 youth.
2. 2. All youth shall be at least 12 years old and/or in the seventh grade and no more than 18 years old and/or in high school to be eligible for membership.
- .3. It is recommended that:
 - .a. no more than two-thirds of the members shall be from one state.
 - .b. no more than 75% of the members shall be of one gender.
 - .c. at least 15% of the members shall be from 7th, 8th or 9th grades.
 - .d. at least 15% of the members shall consist of minority youth.

Section B Terms:

1. Terms for members shall be one year and shall be renewable until the youth are no longer eligible.

Section C Duties and Responsibilities:

1. The Board of Directors shall recruit volunteers, keep members informed, seek and select projects, raise funds,^{1A} and make community presentations in order to maintain enthusiasm for YVCQCA to meet its mission.

Section D Meetings:

1. The Board of Directors of YVC-QCA shall have no fewer than nine regular meetings a year.^{2B} A written notice shall be sent to all board members at least one week prior to the meeting.
2. 2. A planning retreat shall be held each year.
3. 3. The annual meeting will take place at the retreat.
4. 4. Special meetings may be called by the Executive Committee or the Program Coordinator at the discretion of either party.

Section E Conduct of Meetings:

1. 1. Meetings shall be facilitated by the Speaker, or in the absence of the Speaker, by the Secretary.
2. 2. A quorum shall consist of one-third of the board members.

Section F Nominations and Elections:

1. 1. Nominations for the board shall be sought from the community and accepted year round.
2. 2. Applications will be presented at the following board meeting and voted for approval.

Section G Removal and Vacancies:

1. 1. Termination of membership on the board of directors may be voluntary by written resignation to the Executive Committee.
2. 2. Termination of membership may be recommended after a member has been absent without a valid excuse from three consecutive regular meetings or a total of five meetings during the YVC-QCA program year.
3. 3. Termination of membership may be recommended after failure to participate actively on at least one committee, excluding the Executive Committee.
4. 4. Termination of membership may be recommended after failure to participate in 40% of the short-term projects or one summer project.
5. 5. Youth shall be ineligible for membership if over the age of 18 or graduated from high school.
6. 6. Recommendations for termination must be passed by a two-thirds vote of those present.^{3C}

ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS

Section A Establishment:

1. The officers of the YVC-QCA shall consist of the Speaker, the Treasurer and the Secretary/Historian.

Section B Duties and Responsibilities:

1. 1. The Speaker shall preside over Board and Executive Committee meetings and shall facilitate discussion and decision-making.
2. 2. The Treasurer shall work closely with the Volunteer Center and United Way staffs on financial management of the organization and shall keep the YVC-QCA board informed of current financial status.^{4D} Additionally, the Treasurer shall serve as Chair of the Fund Raising Committee.
2. 3. The Secretary/Historian shall keep records of each board and executive committee meeting. Additionally, the Secretary/Historian shall receive and hold for the organization's permanent files all written reports from committees and shall maintain a YVC-QCA scrapbook of clippings and other materials.

Section C Terms:

1. Officers shall serve a period of one year and may be re-elected an additional year. After serving two consecutive terms, they are ineligible to serve in that office.

Section D Nominations and Elections:

1. 1. Elections shall take place during the April board meeting.
2. 2. A slate of officers shall be presented for approval at the board meeting immediately preceding the April board meeting.
3. 3. Nominations shall be either by a committee established by the board for such purposes or by floor nominations.
4. 4. Elections shall take place at the annual meeting.

Section E Removal and Vacancies:

1. Termination of officers may be voluntary by written resignation to the Executive Committee.
2. Termination of officers may be recommended after an officer has been absent without a valid excuse from two consecutive Executive Committee meetings or a total of four Executive Committee meetings in one program year.
3. Recommendation for termination of officers shall be approved by two-thirds vote of those present.^{3C}
4. Vacancies of any offices shall be filled at the following board meeting by special election.

ARTICLE V - COMMITTEES

Section A Executive Committee:

1. 1. There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of the Officers of the board, a member-at-large elected by the YVC-QCA board at the April board meeting, and the Chairs and Co-chairs of each Standing Committee.
2. 2. Any staff of YVC-QCA are ex-officio members of the Executive Committee.
3. 3. The Executive Committee shall meet monthly before the regular board meetings and any other times deemed necessary. The Committee shall set the agenda for board meetings, hear committee reports, help establish priorities for the organization, and participate in the

evaluation of the Program Coordinator.^{5E}

Section B Standing Committees:

- .1. The Fund Raising Committee shall raise funds for the organization's activities in consultation with the Advisory Board and program and sponsor staff. The Treasurer shall serve as Chair.^{6F}
- .2. The Membership Committee shall recruit and inform youth volunteers for YVC-QCA projects. There shall be a Co-Chair for Recruitment and a Co-Chair for information (Retention).^{7G}
- .3. The Projects Committee shall participate in the selection, execution

.and evaluation of projects for youth volunteers. There shall be a Co-Chair for Selection/Execution and a Co-Chair for Evaluation.^{8H}

2. 4. The Public Relations Committee shall participate in marketing and publicity for the organization. There shall be one Chair.^{9I}

3. 5. Committee Chairs and Co-chairs shall be elected by a majority vote of the committee members present at the first committee meeting after the annual retreat.

Section C Ad-Hoc Committee:

1. Ad-Hoc Committees may be appointed by the Board or the Executive Committee as deemed necessary.

ARTICLE VI - OFFICE

- A. The offices shall be those of the two co-sponsors, located at 1417 Sixth Avenue in Moline or at 1705 Second Avenue in Rock Island.

ARTICLE VII - FISCAL YEAR

- A. The organization's fiscal year shall be from July 1 until June 30.

ARTICLE VIII - AMENDMENTS

- A. These By-Laws may be amended by a majority vote of those present, provided that one week notice of the proposed amendment has been provided to all board members.^{10J}

Notations to By-Laws developed by the Youth Volunteer Corps of Quad Cities, IA/IL

- 1A. Fundraising is generally the responsibility the Sponsoring Organization's Executive Director and Board of Directors. The YVC Advisory Council may fundraise for the program as well.
- 2B. Some programs have their councils meet biweekly.
- 3C. It is recommended that a quorum be present for the vote.
- 4D. Responsibility for financial accountability generally reside with the staff and board of directors of the sponsoring agency.
- 5E. This responsibility generally resides with the Sponsoring Organization's program supervisor.

- 6F. Some programs permit youth to raise funds for service projects, conference participation and other activities. The Quad Cities program has a small budget allocated for any fundraising costs, such as purchasing recognition items for serv-a-thon events, etc.
- 7G. The Retention sub-committee works with the Public Relations committee to inform current volunteers about service projects and activities. The Retention sub-committee also compiles volunteer statistics and handles volunteer recognition. The committee is allotted a small budget for recognition and other committee activities.
- 8H. Projects are voted on by the youth board. The committee also has a small budget to design service projects if there is a gap in project submissions.
- 9I. The committee produces a bimonthly newsletter and works with the media and school newspapers. The committee has a small budget for postage, copying, etc.
- 10J. It is suggested that amendments be voted on at the annual meeting.

Recognition



Recognition of Youth Volunteers is an important element of the YVC experience. Since volunteers are not paid, programs generally plan recognition events to showcase Youth Volunteer contributions. While most events are held at the end of the summer, it also is important to recognize contributions of school year volunteers.

Recognition events also can be used to recognize Team Leaders, parents, funders, agencies, schools, Advisory Council members, project staff and others. Promotional materials such as event programs, brochures and news releases can be successful vehicles for recognizing and listing funders, agencies, schools and others. Additional information for recognizing funders is listed in Chapter 3. Other recognition suggestions are listed in Chapter 10, Marketing and Promotions.

Programs also generally offer volunteers promotional and recognition items at various levels of participation. Some programs offer volunteers YVC buttons, then present

volunteers with a YVC T-shirt after a particular number of hours of service. (All summer volunteers generally get T-shirts.) In addition, YVC offers volunteers recognition certificates and lapel pins for 250 or more service hours.

Programs also recognize the contributions of their volunteers by writing letters of recommendation, nominating them for scholarships and awards, offering public recognition through the media and nominating them for national leadership activities like YVCA's Board of Directors and Youth Service America's Youth Action Council.

YVCA offers programs buttons, service hour pins, certificates and other recognition items. In addition, YVCA provides a clearinghouse through Share Network for organizations to announce leadership and recognition opportunities for Youth Volunteers.

A free, 100-page booklet, *Accent on Recognition: Saying Thank You to Donors and Volunteers*, offers creative ideas on how to recognize donors and volunteers.

YVC Recognition Ideas



(Involve youth and/or parents of YV's in as many of your Recognition Activities as possible--in selecting, planning, organizing, and implementing them)

Personal Recognition

Kind words of praise after seeing them in action, on daily/weekly basis

Personal note or fun postcard of thanks

Phone call or email message

Hugs or pats on the back

Phone call or note of commendation to their parent(s)

Have YV's write notes to themselves--(hold and mail to them in 2-6 months!)

Public Recognition

List YV's and accomplishments in your YVC Newsletter or on Web Page

Include recognition in school announcements and notices in school papers
 Send out press releases to invite media to service projects
 Nominate youth for community service awards
 Contact local newspapers for recognition column or feature article
 Radio public service announcements or public affairs shows
 Ask agencies for help in recognizing the YV's
 Display pictures from your YVC projects in public presentations/at schools
 Get a proclamation from the Mayor's office for YVC Recognition Day
 Have public recognition on school TV stations or local cable programs
 Offer special parking/office space for YV of the Month
 Feature a YV of the Month in Newsletter or on Your Web Page
 Have bulletin boards in YVC office and/or at local schools with pictures of YV's
 Public recognition from school authorities
 Create a YVC Wall of Fame in your community
 Prepare a public display of YV's in action for local mall, city hall, libraries, etc.
 Design a float or other display for a community parade or fair

Awards/Gifts---Related to Service

- Give YVC T-shirts, pins, and certificates, etc. (see Recognition Checklist following)
- Get donated Jackets, T-shirts, caps or that apparel, and put the YVC logo on for YV's
- Give each YV a Team Photo of their YVC Team in action
- Give YV's a book or manual related to volunteering and/or community change
- Share YVC pictures with schools for their yearbooks
- Provide trophies or plaques recognizing YV's
- Create your own buttons or bumper stickers to share (i.e. Proud Parent of a YV)
- Help them create a volunteering/service resume
- Put this resume of them on video or on a web page
- Give YV's a video of their project or of the whole YVC program
- Have YV's make jewelry for one another (provide the materials)
- Have YV's make other gifts for one another (with extra prizes for creativity)
- Provide business cards for YV's---or the template to allow them to create their own

Other Awards/Gifts Ideas

- Bring food to the project site or have it in the office for YV's
- Get donated coupons for food, movies(rentals or at the theater) or other entertainment
- Arrange for tickets to sporting event (pro or college)
- Arrange for tickets to the theater or other cultural events, concerts, etc.
- Arrange for guest passes to other local, popular facilities or events

- Provide a Dollar Store Goodie Bag
- Arrange for local business discounts with YVC membership card

Enrichment/Personal Growth Opportunities

- Offer leadership opportunities within your YVC (i.e. on the Advisory Council or as Assistant Team Leaders)
- Set up opportunity for YV's to do presentation on the YVC program (in schools, Rotary Clubs, Chamber of Commerce, City Hall, businesses, or at Conferences or other events)
- Invite YV's to assist in leading trainings on youth service, youth involvement, and other aspects of your program Offer training and enrichment for YV's (i.e. to serve on Boards of Directors, special commissions)
- Assist YV's in producing TV shows on the local cable access station
- Offer the opportunity attend local, state, regional, or national Conferences (i.e. YVC International Conference)
- Arrange for speakers on enrichment topics of the YV's own choosing
- Arrange for youth to attend job fairs, tour colleges or local industry
- Arrange for free lessons in anything/ or discounts to other youth activities for those who have participated in the YVC (through your partnerships)
- Organize a weekend or overnight
- Retreat for your YV's--connect it to a project and provide reflection and leadership growth (have YV's plan the entire event)
- Invite local celebrities to YVC projects or special events--ask them to share words about the value of volunteering

Scholarship/Long Term

Write letters of recommendation Be a willing Reference for YV's on their applications Help YV's create a service resume or write up their experiences in service Nominate YV's for local, regional, and national scholarships Nominate YV's for other awards and honors Assist YV's with job applications and college applications, including being a reference

Special Events

Have a YVC picnic with games, activities, awards, and great food Organize roller or ice skating parties Organize a swimming, bowling, bocce ball, or other sport outing Sponsor a YVC Dance (combine it as a fund-raiser) Take a trip to the Zoo, Amusement Park, or other special place nearby Organize a camping trip (again, you may combine this with an outdoors service project) Organize a team of YV's to visit and serve with another YVC Take a boat ride, historical tour, or city tour Go to the circus Participate in local parades Host an annual YVC Banquet or Recognition Event

(the sky's the limit) Organize monthly fun potluck parties for any YV's who want to attend Offer special limo rides for YV's

Seasonal Events

- Hay Ride
- Pumpkin Carving Party
- YVC Winter Holidays party
- Sledding/toboggan parties
- MLK Day of Service Special Events
- National Youth Service Day special event
- YV's sponsor and take part in an Easter Egg Hunt
- Host a Post-Prom party for YV's
- Surfing parties
- Organize a hike with picnic or stop for ice-cream
- Ice-cream parties



Recognition Checklist (from YV File)

Name of

YV: _____

School: _____

Phone: _____

Volunteer Service Recognition Item Date Received Initial 10 hours YVC T-shirt

_____ 25 hours YVC Hat _____ 50 hours YVC "50" Pin _____

_____ 100 hours YVC Patch _____ 150 hours YVC Name Tag _____

_____ 250 hours YVC "250" Pin _____

Other Recognition Provided (may include awards nominated by the YVC, recognition provided by agencies, opportunities to speak or present in public, opportunities to attend local, regional, state, or national conferences, etc.):

Special Note: Some of the above items are available in bulk purchase from YVCA and others were created specially by a local YVC program to recognize their own YVs.

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