

Evaluation Results of
Points of Light Foundation's
Training of Trainers to Conduct
"Essential Strategies for Partnering with
Volunteers in Low-Income Communities:
Building Effective Partnerships"

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INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes (1) the evaluation results of the Training of Trainers (TOT) program conducted in November 2003 by the Points of Light Foundation staff, (2) the follow-up reports completed by TOT graduates after they started training sessions in their local areas; and (3) evaluations from participants of those local programs.

The purpose of TOT was to provide nonprofit leaders with the skills and information necessary to train other nonprofit leaders in their own communities. The TOT program taught them skills and techniques to help them conduct a capacity-building workshop entitled *Essential Strategies for Partnering with Volunteers in Low-Income Communities: Building Effective Partnerships.*"

During TOT, participants learn the roles of a trainer, how adults learn, and how to plan and organize a workshop and lead a group through exercises and discussions. With these skills, participants learn to become trainers who should be able to deliver a workshop that meets the following objectives:

- develop the capacity of local nonprofits to utilize residents of low-income communities as volunteers,
- develop the capacity of local nonprofits to deliver services more effectively to low-income communities, particularly through volunteering,
- develop the capacity of local nonprofits to serve underserved low-income communities.

TRAINING OF TRAINERS

TOT was held in Washington D.C. on November 4–6, 2003, as part of the Volunteer Management Training Series (VTMS). A total of 30 community leaders, many of whom work for Volunteer Centers throughout the country, participated in the program. A post-training evaluation was distributed to all participants. A total of 21 participants (70 percent) completed the evaluations. All participants who responded agreed or strongly agreed that the TOT program would make them a better trainer.



As Table 1 illustrates, the participants found most of the topics helpful, but 90 percent found that it was very helpful when they were allowed to practice teach a session and receive feedback from other participants. In addition, when asked “*What was the most helpful thing you learned during these 3 days,*” 71 percent said that practice teaching was the most helpful.

Table 1: Train of Trainers Post-Session Evaluation

Topic/Session	Very Helpful	Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Least Helpful
Participating in “Essential Strategies for Partnering with Volunteers in Low-Income Communities”	76%	19%	5%	0%
Learning the roles of a trainer	71%	19%	10%	0%
Learning how adults learn	48%	38%	14%	0%
Getting an overview of VMTS and of the training manual and materials	43%	52%	0%	5%
Learning tips and techniques in using instructional aids, such as flip charts	38%	38%	24%	0%
Learning tips and techniques in using some teaching methods, such as leading group discussions	57%	29%	14%	0%
Practice teaching a session and receiving feedback from other trainers	90%	5%	5%	0%

When asked which session was the least helpful, the highest response (25 percent) was that the session about how adults learn was the least helpful. Respondents often explained that they already knew this material. When asked for suggestions for future training, several people said there was a problem with the pre-conference materials. This is consistent with the responses we received when participants were asked to rate *Information given/sent before the training*—43 percent gave the preliminary information a poor or fair rating, while 57 percent said it was good or excellent. This is in contrast to the responses about other program logistics such as training materials shared during the training, classroom, hotel, and meals. All of these were rated as good or excellent by more than 80 percent and none rating these logistics as poor. A complete list of responses to the open-ended questions is included in Attachment A.



TOT FOLLOW-UP

Of the 30 TOT participants, 26 were trained to deliver the session on partnering with volunteers in low-income communities. Of those 26, three resigned from their positions before they were able to conduct trainings; one worked at the same organization as another trainer; one trainer conducted two trainings; and two trainers conducted training sessions, but did not return their evaluations. In addition, two trainers have not conducted any trainings yet. This resulted in a total of 16 trainings conducted by 15 trainers, and 15 sets of evaluations returned. When they returned the evaluations, the trainers were asked to rate their level of preparedness for the training and the usefulness of the training materials. All trainers rated both their preparedness and the usefulness of the training materials as either 4 or 5, with a 5 being very high and 1 not at all. Below are listed some comments (a list of all comments is included in Attachment B) provided in response to the open-ended questions:

What went well in your training?

“All the pieces fit together. The community speakers reinforced points in the training and added new insights. Everyone participated in the exercises.”

“The materials supplied by the POLF led to a very efficient presentation.”

What did not go well in your training?

“I’m not sure the handouts were as effective as I would have liked.”

What could have been better?

“It would have been helpful to have even more specific info on HOW TO plan and implement a project in a low-income community. Would have liked to give participants more nuts and bolts- what we presented still felt a bit vague.”

What can be improved?

“Need better and more handouts.”

Other Comments:

“This is an excellent addition to the VMTS and requires a ‘re-thinking’ by volunteer centers and other agencies wishing to engage volunteerism in low-income communities.”

“I don’t think we have ever launched a new curriculum to such good reviews.”



RESULTS FROM THE SESSIONS CONDUCTED BY THE TRAINERS

Approximately 340 people were trained in sessions held by the trainers. Of those, 266 completed a post-training evaluation, for a response rate of 78 percent. Part of the agreement to attend TOT was that the person trained would hold at least one training for a minimum of 15 people. Approximately half of the groups (53.3%) had 15 or more participants with 40 percent having 26 or more people trained.

As Table 2 illustrates, most participants rated the presenters, the location, and the handouts as good or great. The handouts had 13 percent who said that they were poor or average, perhaps an area for further evaluation.

Table 2: Training Participants Evaluation of Workshop Logistics

How would you rate...	Poor	Average	Good	Great	N/A	No Answer
the lead presenter(s)?	1%	7%	32%	59%	0%	1%
guest speakers?	1%	4%	31%	40%	20%	4%
location?	3%	9%	37%	48%	2%	1%
handouts?	3%	10%	33%	48%	5%	1%

As Table 3 illustrates, training participants indicated that most of the workshop either significantly or very significantly developed their awareness, knowledge and interest in low-income communities.

Table 3: Training Participants Evaluation of Workshop Effectiveness

Did this workshop develop your...	Not at all	Somewhat	Significantly	Very Significantly	N/A	No Answer
awareness of the misconceptions and myths that cloud understanding of low-income communities?	3%	34%	40%	20%	0%	3%
knowledge of the steps to partnering effectively with volunteers from low-income communities?	1%	23%	48%	25%	0%	3%
interest in partnering with low-income communities?	3%	16%	45%	31%	1%	4%



**ATTACHMENT A:
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FROM THE TOT EVALUATIONS**



What was the most helpful thing you learned during these three days?

- Preparation of materials and rehearsing.
- All of the second day.
- Tips on teaching methods. It helped to hear other's experiences.
- VMTS overview, low income module.
- Practice, teach back.
- I learned about my specific techniques as a trainer and what I can do to improve.
- Really try to be literate about community you are serving. Be aware of the learning levels of individuals at your session.
- Teaching/Training Techniques/Hints and Being aware of diversity when planning/training.
- Practice teaching and emphasis on feedback.
- Methods of facilitating a training session. Reminders of special issues in low-income communities. Games and activities.
- How to use one of the VMTS modules and make it my own. Really appreciated the way the trainers modeled good trainer practices.
- Like using parachute going into the community—getting to know how POLF operates and its passions and plans.
- How to use the VMTS notebooks and the “teach back” sessions.
- The variety of practice sessions to learn different ways of presenting the material.
- How to enhance training methods. Teach backs are the best tools.
- Adult learning info.
- Different teaching styles for trainers in the teach-backs. Enjoyed the teach backs to hear the information both Tuesday and Thursday.
- Adult learners learned differently, teaching (learning) styles.
- More about the curriculum—being able to see it first hand and having a chance to practice a piece of it.
- Roles of a trainer. Learning styles of adults. Feedback from practice teaching session.
- I've been inspired and motivated to provide the training and move into a trainer role more often.

What was the least helpful session to you personally and why?

- Learning how adults learn, mostly because it was so short (shallow?)
- Tuesday on “Essential Strategies”
- Getting an overview of VMTS. I've already delivered the training and was very bored.
- Training techniques piece, we were hoping to learn more about VMTS implementation—what works, best practices, etc.
- I would have liked more time spent on VMTS and activities within the series.
- I learned so much in each session and I really appreciate the opportunity (Would have liked a little free time to see DC).
- Instructional aids.
- Overview of other training manuals because already had info.
- Discussion of other POL training guides—could be done via handouts.
- Info about adult learners—I already knew all the material and more.
- Evening Race session.
- The ways adults learn and the instructional aids were something I felt I already knew.
- It wasn't a session so much as the mystery involved or leading up to what we would be doing the first day.
- How adults learn. It was too basic for an audience of seasoned trainers.
- Everything was valuable.
- I know quite a bit about adult learning styles and teaching methods, etc., so that wasn't a lot of new info for me.
- Instructional aids session—more technical support etc. PowerPoint etc. About training setup: Make sure that the agenda is as close to being set as possible for travel purposes! Get info out early to make travel plans!



- (Yesterday's chicken lunch)—All sessions were great!

What was missing that you would have liked to have had included?

- Connect between the monograph and VMTS#7
- The same level of depth in training the trainer on VMTS that we had in "Essential Strategies".
- More info on training tips (preparation, getting over nervousness, etc.), but not on the training materials.
- More info re VMTS.
- More focus on VMTS series.
- A few hours to tour DC on my own.
- More about speech delivery. Tips on habits like being tongue-tied, etc. . .
- Informing agencies how to work with volunteers.
- More community participants.
- Nothing that I can think of right now.
- Sorry to hear the \$'s involved with the cost of VMTS teaching materials.
- More about the VMTS training set was needed.
- Opportunity to share and network. A built-in time for this.
- Networking time (besides lunch time). Sharing of stories about participants' own low-income communities.
- Nothing. Very inclusive!
- Specific networking time.
- More info on VMTS and applied some of the techniques to those modules.
- Content and discussion of things that organizations should do internally before they even think of partnering with low-income communities—i.e. diversity workshops with staff, anti-racism work, general relationship building (go to meetings and events that the community holds) and more stuff about TRUST and CREDIBILITY. These words don't appear anywhere yet they are key.
- More info on learning styles. More info on "how" to present/demo, maybe through role playing, etc.

What suggestions would you give for future meetings/trainings that would make you more comfortable?

- Why did the lights dim? Consistency between pre-meeting and on-site materials, forms, instructions, etc.
- The info given before was misleading and confusing. I felt very unprepared (hotel, flight, materials, my training part (teach back)).
- More info beforehand re training site and teach back info before departure
- More information prior to meeting—flights, hotel, expectations.
- Just to be able to tour city.
- Just more time to prepare "teach back".
- More variety in the meals, especially breakfast items.
- Would like to see "Leadership Plenty" materials even though I didn't get here for that training.
- There was confusion when I got the first approval letter about whether we were supposed to make our own hotel reservations or whether POLF was taking care of that. When I called the hotel, they knew nothing about the training. And then I couldn't reach anyone at POLF for a few days.
- Some more reasons to be connected all the time, not just at trainings.
- Let us out around 5 p.m. Too much too late will not be learned.
- Allow more than one staff from VC to attend.
- Need curriculum development info.



- Make available all the “brainstorming” ideas. Have groups write all the answers on one sheet of paper, collect and run off, and hand out for other brainstorming sessions that were done on the wall. Have POL person write it down all on one paper and hand out.
- Better hotel. Have options for night activities. Would have loved to go on a Washington, DC tour.
- A mechanism for getting people hooked up for going out to dinner.
- Just more info and trainings in the future! Every little bit helps!

Other comments:

- Thank you!
- Advance mailing (?) of materials to be covered was a little misleading. I anticipated the same depth on VMTS that we had in “Essential Strategies.”
- A lot of this training was very elementary and therefore very boring to me (esp. the part on “tips of training materials”). If they don’t know how to use an overhead, they shouldn’t be here. Maybe have a separate track for those with training experience, esp. in VMTS.
- Loved the Leadership Plenty training!
- Thank you.
- Excellent job!
- Great job guys!!!
- This was an amazing training! I so enjoyed the facilitators and how engaging they made the sessions. Games were the best way to learn. Yay!
- I learned so much from the participants. Truly great experience.
- POLF team is great. So helpful, knowledgeable, and talented—AND compassionate. Such fun to get to know all of you.
- Very impressed with the training. Actually was the best training I’ve ever been to (no lie!).
- This training gave us the opportunity to learn that POLF staff are real people.
- Thank you!
- Thanks for finding the funding to make this happen!
- Thank you!
- We were kept engaged—which I appreciated—I was extremely energetic even after four days.
- Hotel was not the best. Room internet not working. TV works sporadically. No newspaper at door.
- Great trainers! What a great staff POLF has. . . cherish them! Thank you for the opportunity to come to training on your “dime”!



**ATTACHMENT B:
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FROM THE TOT FOLLOW-UP EVALUATIONS IN THE FIELD**



How else can we help you work in low-income communities?

- Hold regular meetings for agencies to compare notes
- Question: How do racial differences affect communities?
- Another workshop like this
- Ask
- More workshops
- More discussion
- This one is tough because so often there are specific issues to each community that makes it hard to offer broad generalizations
- Give workshops and bring people who have done work with communities
- Getting us involved in existing or upcoming projects
- Networking opportunities for networking between organizations that work in low income neighborhoods
- Sharing more experiences
- Provide more local resources for immigrants and refugees
- Offer as many free services as you can
- Provide us with ways to offer residents of low-income communities benefits for their time
- Educational seminars & networking events
- Having speakers who have actually done it. More . . . if it is a high profile person, ie Gov, Lt. Gov
- The best way is just to get down and work with supervisor support.
- Provide (keep providing) support
- How to get more money
- Provide a business card exchange time.
- More specific skills training. Presentation/facilitation. Life skills training. Many VISTAs are dealing with the same issues as the low-income residents and it is very challenging to focus on SVC, when you can't manage your own budget.
- I have a lot of resources already, but thanks for the offer.
- Provide funds.
- \$
- More concrete examples maybe a video demonstration.
- More information about low-income communities. Why are these stereotyped; how can we break them down in the communities or a one-on-one basis. Defining low-income; what it means to be within one. Maybe a PowerPoint presentation on target areas, maybe have a low-income person come and speak about their reality.
- Funds
- United Way could organize a community workshop in a low-income community. Invite many agencies who could answer questions. Find out what the human services needs are from community members and match those needs to a partnering agency.
- Put information gathered in this workshop in our hands after meeting.
- Communicate available resources.
- Inform attendees of upcoming community meetings, fairs, etc. email.
- Giving contact information into some of the low-income communities where partnerships may be in place and those communities that may not have been met or recognized.
- Continue the training and networking sessions.
- Continue to be there for the communities for training and resources.
- It is good to know what United Way has to offer in this area.



- Develop a plan/ procedure how to get low-income volunteers interested in volunteering for an agency; getting rid of the stigma surrounding the fear of volunteering.
- Help to recruit volunteers or training to show how.
- Maybe make a list of organizations that you know are willing to collaborate together for one cause.
- Partnering agencies.
- Identify communities with need for youth activities.
- Coaching as we begin process? A follow up conference in 6 months, 1 year for people who made changes to see what has been done. Problems and solutions.
- Additional information on future workshop. Follow up materials from presentation.
- More case studies, specific ideas, needs assessment strategies
- Provide some materials and contacts.
- Maybe establishing a cleaning house (e-mail group) for ideas that have worked
- Any new information
- More community volunteer stories
- I'm aware that you're a resource that we can tap into. You may provide some strategies that may save time and resources.
- By connecting us with actual leaders and organizations in specific communities across the country. Perhaps how to interact with the low-income communities based on the fact that we and a lot of our current volunteers come from middle-income backgrounds.
- If there are additional resources and exercises for volunteers who serve on First Book Advisory Boards that we could share. Insight into communities with a high need for books that you have worked with and established some connections, such as those profiled in "A Matter of Survival."
- Provide stories about what has worked.
- I would love more opportunities to meet and interact with other nonprofits and community groups involved in direct/indirect service.
- Help develop fund raising strategies in low-income communities.
- Maybe get more copies of the points of light booklet "matter of survival."
- Just going into the communities themselves and getting involved
- Give examples of specific agencies that might need help.
- I think that as long as I'm able to ask questions as they come, I'll do fine.
- I'll have to get back to you on that.
- Be supportive of new ideas. Direct us to areas that have need/potential for community development.
- By having free HIPPA training in Schuykill County
- Share a list of attendees with agency address, phone #, attendee name, and email contact for future networking.
- It would be great to have a list of low-income housing areas in the county.
- Educate / awareness
- This seminar was very helpful and we received a lot of information and this was a big help for us.
- Continue the networking.
- Get us lists of NPs action in low-income areas.
- Lots of discussion.
- Maybe have someone from DFCS.
- More meetings like this.
- More low-income groups here.
- Some follow-up meetings to do more discussion.
- Identification of some local groups.



- Would love to have notes from our workshop.
- Help find a receptive community and I'm ready to work.
- Show us how to evaluate needs.
- Will let you know. . .
- Increase our grant—help us hook into other organizations who work with low-income (mentally ill-poor-foreign-disabled people)
- Concentrate on rural areas. There's a huge difference between urban & rural communities in resources, volunteering, etc.
- Give us more money.
- Services, Resources, you name it, we want it!
- We are looking for other funding sources to help us with our mission to eliminate lead from our children.
- The free access to this class really helped, our faith-based agency has \$0 right now for continuing education.
- I think the truth about volunteering is to look at need and strengths in a community—low income does not always signify the community is a negative environment. So, we need to partner with people because, in general, people need help at times. . . basically the principles of social justice.
- What is most effective publicity to encourage low-income community to participate in other successful techniques used to encourage participation?
- I would have to know/listen to the ways you could help.
- Provide transportation & groups for people that want to work in low-income communities.
- Transportation in getting from the academy to the volunteer project.
- Tell us what we can do so we can get involved and then help others to get involved.
- Give local examples & maybe people in those communities to talk to about their problems.
- Provide more opportunities (and/or information on those opportunities) at different times (not Saturday morning).
- I am very interested, but sometimes it is difficult to find transportation and time that we can get away. Offering rides and letting us know about events or times that we could help out would be great.
- Provide new ideas and opportunities to volunteer.
- Activities with coaches from communities in union with USNA varsity and club sports. Leftover, unserved food from King Hall? There is way too much of this. I think it should go somewhere.
- Show us where and what to sign up for. Give us dates to work so that it's easy to just do it.
- Perhaps provide/suggest opportunities for us to meet & discuss issues with low-income community leaders.
- Make volunteering opportunities on Sundays and Saturday afternoons and at other times, instead of only Saturday mornings.
- Continue contact and organize projects for individual companies to work on. Most companies want/need to do at least one day or half-day long community service project each month—working with kids and people would be a nice change from picking up trash.
- Churches provide people with a good incentive to help their own community. Already most people do volunteer through their church from cooking, childcare, to loaning money, etc. I think also providing more leadership roles and job opportunities will get people volunteering.
- Give opportunities for squads/companies to get more people involved.
- Provide plausible options, not just theoretical ideas about volunteering. I don't want to learn about volunteering, I want to volunteer and help out.
- Keep us aware of projects that we can do—especially on Saturdays and Friday nights.
- More opportunities to volunteer—existing projects to join



What did you like most about this workshop?

- Homeless presentation
- Presenter from homeless shelter
- Made some points that were either new or refreshers for me to think about and remember to help avoid or create obstacles in working with diverse groups.
- "Circle" style; interaction between staff & presenter
- Opportunity to network concerns
- I liked the examples / descriptions provided for each of the facts.
- That she caused me to think about how I can better access volunteers.
- Speaker was interesting—& thought provoking
- Roberta presented in a "down-to-earth" way. Easy to understand.
- Informative, thought provoking.
- Built on beliefs that I already hold. Was great to have ideas taken further. Variety of activities.
- Discusser's examples
- Short, to point, useful info
- Meeting people.
- The handouts look good initially. I look forward to reading them more in-depth at a later time.
- Activities interlaced with learning.
- Interactive—not a lecture format.
- Working in a team and exchange information.
- I like the sharing of ideas from everyone.
- Games, fun stuff & activities, group participation.
- The input from the group, being able to have discussions, & the games were fun
- Research/info has applicability to international projects as well—emphasis on looking with in a community for ideas, resources, leadership.
- Open discussion.
- Information
- Guest speaker
- The information that was provided was of very much need for my project, I plan to utilize it
- Getting me out of the clinic to do more AmeriCorps
- The interaction with the AmeriCorps members brought enthusiasm, creativity, energy, and novel ideas.
- Sharing of ideas
- The interaction and sharing of ideas
- The information
- The games that really helped
- The information on how to get community leaders
- The team work, question and answer time
- FRAN, the activities were really fun, too!
- Splitting into groups and working with other AmeriCorp members
- Inter-communication
- Fraternizing with fellow VISTA/AmeriCorp
- Seeing our own members, we're not all together very often, seeing other program people I've interacted with & meeting one good new contact
- Different ideas that others had



- Information in handouts, book
- Networking
- The involvement the participation has in the training
- Handouts
- The games
- Very informative
- The hands-on group exercises
- The discussions—exercises
- Informal, informative
- Guest speaker
- New ideas
- Interaction with group. Opportunity to hear and learn from others working in the field and get ideas. Brainstorming.
- Presentations, interaction with others, activities.
- Activities, brainstorming
- Learning about things that don't work, lessons learned
- The opportunity to hear ideas and suggestions from each person and organization represented.
- Exercises
- The food, networking, handouts
- Interaction exercises, networking with peers
- The strategic plan and strategies to include volunteers in the process of overcoming the differences in culture and values; meeting the needs of the community first and then creating a partnership
- New Info and expanded thoughts on processes
- Connection of activities with lectures, set-up of room
- Great ideas which will be e-mailed after the workshop
- The fact that you e-mail information and agencies compiled during the workshop. Interaction during activities
- Good job in explaining the process.
- I like the variety in presentations, exercises, leading speaker and guest speaker
- The asset awareness process
- I would like to bring this workshop to other areas. Bring more information about this subject to volunteer administrators around the state, because of the growing Hispanic community here in North Carolina
- Interaction
- The opportunity to learn how people have successfully done what I want to do
- Guest speakers, projects they are engaged in. Group interaction. Case study discussion
- Speakers
- The game and information sharing between agencies
- The group activities were varied and very interesting
- Handouts were very good. Wish more had read it, because not sure how much we moved beyond it. Asset based model. Need more, and maybe begin with that as context for later discussion.
- Natalia/Gustaro presentations, activities
- Natalie and Gustavo's presentations
- The number of learning activities
- Ms. Coad's presentation
- Opportunity to meet people and network
- Interactivity, hearing about other projects



- The guest speakers giving us a reality check on how to partner. Exercise and games for interaction and idea flow.
- The interactive exercises helped to make their points understandable and memorable
- Inspiring story by Ms. Stamey
- Get up and move around.
- Presentation of information, discussions, speakers
- Learning about the history and success of partnering towards a common goal.
- Good format, friendly, respectful of everyone, an excellent advocacy for shared leadership and shared power.
- The activities and how they tied into each topic. Opening our eyes to thinking about how we approach "low-income" communities and with what expectations we do so.
- The exercise that allowed us to go around and brainstorm how to reach out and mobilize volunteers was very helpful and gave me some good ideas.
- Gave a good overview, provided broad, wide reaching ideas to improve approach to communication.
- Interactive quality
- Great and relevant topic for organization. It really got some good discussion started about the ways we could more effectively work in low-income communities. This was a topic we'd never discussed as an organization, despite being it being an integral part of our mission. Hearing and thinking about the issues surrounding working with and inspiring people in low-income families made me realize how we're not adequately serving low-income communities. For an organization that prides itself on grassroots organizing we are not doing an effective job of reaching the communities.
- Wonderful presenter. I like the combination of interaction and also the random grouping for group activities. I loved the lists that teams build upon as they go around the room.
- Step 4, chance to think about community. Also, good setting discussion near the beginning.
- Interactive, fun, and most of all informative! I have some great ideas of how we can better partner with leaders in low-income communities.
- It is realistic. It is about increasing awareness, not about "rescuing." It is if anything about getting over illusions of parachuting.
- The activities, cultural autobiography, discussion
- Cultural autobiography, learning about my fellow leaders. I wish there was more of an opportunity to share.
- Like talk about sustainability.
- The presenter was dynamic and had good examples.
- I liked the interactive aspect of the entire presentation, I felt very open to make comments and ask questions. I thought introducing each other more personally was great.
- Ben's enthusiasm
- Lots of chance for hands-on involvement.
- Networking
- The topics were very interesting and the presenters did an excellent job of keeping the attention of the participants.
- Jackie Brown, real life input
- Nancy Clark presenter
- Group participation. Handouts, a matter of survival in
- Sharing with others who truly understand what it's like dealing with volunteers
- Networking with others
- Great presentation of information! Great to see the faces of different organizations.
- Networking and hearing from Jackie
- Meeting new people
- It was very entertaining, not boring
- Meeting key people with local organizations



- Having new ideas
- Knowledge of network system
- Speaker, group activities
- Networking, learning about other organizations and how they work. How to work with low-income
- Networking, sharing of challenges
- Speakers
- Meeting with new people, networking
- Nancy Clark as a presenter . . . and she's thorough and kind in sharing great information. Sharron Wabby was so enthusiastic, loved hearing about SCA, I shall definitely network with her on "litter."
- Networking with peers
- Everyone's involvement.
- It was all good!
- Useful handouts.
- Good handouts.
- Discussions and activities.
- I liked the activities.
- Everything.
- Good atmosphere, very positive.
- Group participation.
- The interactive aspect.
- Re-emphasized things I had learned with other groups.
- Presentation of info through creative methods (game, group discussion of issues/ moving to different stations to answer questions).
- Group discussion, brainstorming.
- The idea exchange on the sheets.
- Activities
- The activities seemed very on target. I like having each location be a different group. The case study was fascinating.
- I like to hear input from different areas of the state.
- The interaction of the group participants.
- Met another person interested in reaching poor—who will always be with us.
- The discussions made very good points.
- Interactive games, treats, discussion.
- The class today was one of the best.
- The activities really forwarded the discussion. The discussion was the best.
- It provided some good ideas for different approaches to reach these families.
- Hearing others' experiences.
- Informative, statewide forum. The cost was great! Interesting topic that was relevant.
- Networking
- Interaction with the other groups.
- The allowance for plenty of time for individual comments.
- I enjoyed the discussion and people's ideas. I also appreciate the focus on assessing community strengths as much as community needs. Doing activities was fun and educational.
- Convenient, good discussion
- Group discussion, treats!



- Local access to course without traveling.
- Technology
- The interaction with the group
- Everyone present was serious about helping.
- I liked the amount of people that attended and how the presenters incorporated the participation of everyone in some way, shape, or form.
- The speakers' connection of concepts to real-life situations
- When we all got up and came up with strategies to get low-income communities involved and how to get involved ourselves
- Game show!
- Interactivity of information
- Just getting people to show some of their commitment to service
- The enthusiasm they presented.
- Pleasant atmosphere, very well presented.
- Including the audience with activities so it does not get boring
- The interaction with others
- Very open, very friendly, informative, and useful
- Interaction and involvement
- Hands-on group activities and friendly, enthusiastic presenters
- The hands-on activities vs. just lectures
- Interaction, friendliness, colorful and fun presentations
- The energy and enthusiasm of Fay and the other speakers
- The games generated involvement would make the brief more interesting. I especially like being able to get out of the seat and move around.
- Interactive, game time
- The specific analysis and specific advice
- Ideas on bridging communication gaps with inhabitants of low-income communities
- Interactive

What would you change about this workshop?

- More in depth—this seemed to be for beginners
- I think it is very well done
- Language seemed to heavily focused on reference to engaging neighborhood residents vs. the broader demographic of just being low-income. While it's true that entire neighborhoods oftentimes fall into this category, low-income families / individuals are not always segmented this way.
- More time would allow the group to discuss presented materials more effectively
- More time
- Make it longer if we can come in with a specific plan we'd like to organize or start
- Need more time
- Nothing
- Longer-
- Longer
- I would have different information written on large paper from what was given in handout
- Seemed very effective



- More time
- More time for detail
- More time
- Nothing
- Better integration of the games. They seemed added-on a bit.
- Everything was perfect
- The visuals
- Initial assumption that we have not grown up in / are a part of what is termed "low income community. . . Assumption that low income is perhaps more concrete a topic than it really is, a changing matter of degree, environmentally dependent one. Didn't feel like we really got down; had real conversation
- Nothing, speakers have a lot to do with workshop being able to pass on the message
- Move it to LV
- More of a variety of speakers
- More classes
- Move it back to LV
- Make the handouts match the presentation. Put acronyms used in the presentation in written, either in handouts or in flip chart or in transparency. Ask questions of participants to determine usefulness of
- I felt that this was an extension of PSO/EST topics. While it is still relevant to what we do, it needs to be changed/ modified/ or another topic area could be addressed. For new VISTAs this is a great workshop and a good reminder for experienced VISTAs, but my feeling of the group was that we have done all of this before. Thanks!
- Portable mic system so speaker can move around room
- This conference needs to be at the beginning of service instead of the last four months
- I would have this training at PSO
- The visuals were plain and quite hard to read. I really liked this issue, but it seemed to be really simplified
- The lead presenter, the style of presentation, the location
- More fun and interactive
- More specific activities and topics, things were too general and too much oversight. Should have more useful 'tools' and details.
- Snacks @ break, real breakfast if you want us to be here, vegetarian option more accessible, I called and still got poultry
- Everything, from the activities to what was discussed. I was very disappointed because the workshop was so basic, assuming you had no knowledge at all of the subject. Everything could have been taken to another level with discussions among participants, as well as a lecture format to become more informed.
- Have it at the beginning of service, not the end of your VISTA year.
- Shorten, less games, less counting off.
- More time for agencies to talk
- Didn't really motivate me.
- Better handouts
- More exercises
- I think workshop was well planned and managed, only thing I would possibly change is day of week, Fridays are not always a good day for meetings.
- Provide handouts of presentation.
- More lecture/question/answer.
- From what I know now moving to the next level would be helpful.
- Bring the guest speakers on first.
- A person from "Points of Light Foundation" to speak.



- The presenters were knowledgeable, but I feel time needed to be spent on working out how to achieve the goals set. Seeing well established programs is great, but time needed to be concentrated on area on the topics.
- Have guest speakers in the middle, people are tired at the end.
- More models of existing partnerships that work.
- Need low-income community leaders to share partnership.
- Copy of speaker presentation
- Either shorten speaker presentations or eliminate lecture approach.
- The time for discussion is very good, but often requires more processing by facilitators. I'm pretty sure not every idea we had was wonderful, so which were good and which were bad?
- Less time spent on classic planning, which all the professionals in the room can do.
- The guest speakers had great information, but maybe doing a stand-up activity right before the guest speaker, so you can keep the attention of the attendees.
- You might encourage participants to share actual situations for the group to discuss / share possible options.
- Nothing other than more volunteer stories.
- Possibly discuss more on step 6 of review of elements, plan project partnership.
- Perhaps analyzing our First Book model in the same way each of the case studies in the monograph is analyzed.
- Time is always a factor and though it was well paced, if there is any way to conserve time it should be taken into consideration.
- Make it longer, more in depth (This is obviously easier said than done at First Book.)
- More time to dive deeper into issues.
- With the knowledge that the resources do not really exist, it would have been wonderful to conduct the workshop all in location. It might have been helpful to partner with another organization to generate new ideas about partnerships and a fresh perspective about First Book.
- Didn't find the game, multiple Qs, too useful.
- For the section on strategizing/ goal setting for First Book, might have been good to focus on how to partner with low-income communities rather than general strategizing (ie how to increase labs, etc.)
- Do the full presentation.
- Maybe put some of the poster's information in the handout.
- Seat 4 people per table.
- Double the folks to give more table surface, cut some of the lights to improve contrast for reviewing transparencies.
- Better address system
- Try to put information in shorter time frame, felt some information repetitive.
- Lack of contrast in viewing the slides
- Building was too cold.
- Cold
- 1 minor thing, all cell phones and pagers should be off.
- Don't change anything.
- Hold it again.
- Wish we had more time.
- Nothing
- More time—less talk—more experiential
- Nothing
- Too quick
- Difficult to assess in such a compacted time frame.
- Start meetings half hour later. This would allow Western NE to eat a bit later and not be eating on the screen. Most classes were out early anyway.



- Perhaps talk about how to better recruit and integrate CMI people into existing volunteer programs with 501(c)(3).
- Have some of the stuff that was on the screen would have been good to have in the handouts.
- Less reading of the material.
- Longer session—important topic matter that could benefit from day long training.
- The handouts were good, but they could be a little more user friendly.
- Try to have more group discussions. It was very beneficial and it gave me another perspective on how to approach the community to make a program a success.
- Maybe half hour shorter
- Very confused with handouts—not sure where you were or which one.
- Nothing
- I've never done the distance learning thing, the technology was an adjustment factor.
- Wayne—get some experience in low-income prior to teaching about it to avoid ignorant comments.
- Nothing
- Furnish list of participants—allow us to contact each other after the courses, especially if more information is needed about comments made.
- Nothing
- I would give more time for the people that attend to absorb the information and plan/organize ideas to use in the community they live in.
- Nothing, very informative
- Nothing
- Seemed a little over my head.
- Go ahead and brief us. We're used to it.
- Add some more specific projects we can sign up for.
- No rush for time.
- Have it be longer, more in-depth.
- If possible, more time.
- The time to give the entire presentation; it was great, but it would be nice to be able to go in more depth.
- Give you more money to use overhead slides.
- Better visual aids, more readable colors (orange doesn't work).
- Less time restraint
- No need to apologize for anything, don't be afraid to speak up. . .
- I would have made it a little longer to include some more of the info that is in the longer version of the presentation.
- It would help if examples of local low-income communities were given. Also, more examples of existing projects would be helpful.
- Make it more structured
- Maybe if it were after school there would be more time to get the un-condensed version
- Talk less about theoretical ideas. It seems like a waste of time to talk about starting to plan to volunteer. Start an actual plan and volunteer. I want to help people and plan about helping people, not plan about planning.

Any other comments?

- Kristina is a wonderful presenter.
- While it may have just been my perception of the presentation, I think stronger emphasis can be made for the ability of individuals to address any need within their community and not just those created by their own living conditions.
- Given time restraints, the presenter was effective in discussion.



- Good ideas.
- Good job.
- Thank-you.
- Good job
- I like the fact that we got to move around and talk to others.
- Good job!
- Very useful, thank you
- The worksheet confused me - I kept looking for where I was supposed to take notes
- Congratulations!
- Most often workshops, I would be asleep or taking a longer break. This workshop was lively, active, hands-on, and full of ideas. Very good workshop.
- I found the second half of the presentation more useful than the first half.
- The second half of the workshop was very strong, I liked it a lot.
- Thanks for holding this summit. It is great for all of us to get together.
- Should stay away from Casinos for future seminars and meetings.
- Thanks for your time and energy in presenting this topic.
- Difficult to correlate handouts with presenter's topics and information.
- This is one of the worst workshops I've been to. I am very disappointed.
- Thank you, it's good to see how we can improve and understand our people / clients— "low-income"
- Angela was great
- I'm really glad I was able to come!
- Assessed based service delivery is a great approach.
- Enjoyed interaction, thank you.
- Great job! Can't wait to get handouts.
- Location, room, food, and presentation especially Allison and Jasmine were great!!
- Good activities and team building!
- Great refreshments, good training.
- Flip chart information should be on transparency for better visibility by entire group
- Create a list of current community neighborhood leaders, publish to all.
- A nice opportunity to step back and really think about what we want and how we can go about getting it!
- Thanks for making us think. Inspirational speaker.
- Octavia synthesized at the end of each section very well, separating as necessary and pointing out salient issues.
- Octavia, you are a natural at presenting and leading.
- I really enjoyed the open communication, dialogue. Not a boring/overwhelming presentation.
- I'd like to present the activities as a project with youth, which means I'll be pursuing the "unlearning racism" curriculum project.
- Really inspirational.
- We should do workshops like this in a low-income area with some residents present.
- Well prepared presentation!
- Thanks again, Gigi.
- Have again in Fall.
- Great discussions.
- Can you be a resource to another committee?
- I had this subject down for June—Evaluation was for May. Will you handle evaluation in May? Make sure that all reference materials are in the packet—number the page.



- Thanks for the distance learning in SCB. I wish I would have known about these courses when they started. Will you offer them again?
- Sheila was great—the activities she led were interesting & informative.
- Thank you!
- Thank you!
- If you use this practice with all volunteers, I believe you will have a successful relationship with all of your volunteers.
- Our office space is in a small congregation—St. Paul United Methodist Church, Elmwood, NE. We all need to collaborate together- Methvision (United Methodist Mental Health Network in Nebraska, nation wide—We hook with any other denomination or secular)
- Very informative. Thanks.
- Thank you for this opportunity!
- Great job.
- Thank you for offering this education to address some very basic issues.
- Wayne made a comment that I found a negative towards people of low income. He said they often have not planned. This comment seems ignorant because you cannot assume this is the case. I am low income by choice and other people by circumstance. Thank you.
- Please furnish handouts for session I missed. Also please send list shown on screen but not in handouts.
- Good presentation, education and fun. The guests and additional project information were of greatest interest.
- Overall, very satisfied
- Thanks. You did a great job, I appreciate it.
- Awesome idea—wouldn't have thought to teach volunteers how to become leaders! So cool.
- The visual aids were well done, however, the writing in orange marker was a little hard to read because of the color and lighting.
- Multimedia makes things more interested as well as provides great insight into what your organization is all about.
- Great job for time allotment.
- Very well done. I think this would be a hugely helpful program. Thank you for all the work that's being done to get more involved.
- How can I actually volunteer in a low-income society? Like a soup kitchen or something?
- Great intro for those who have never worked in low-income communities or have little experience.

The following questions were only asked in PA:

What new ideas did you learn today?

- Communication (not a new idea but very important)
- The effectiveness of talking to others on the same level.
- New contacts in agencies, new directions to seek audiences, new ideas to publicize programs offered.
- There is more potential for recruiting volunteers
- Language is very important. Don't talk down. Let them identify their own problems, empower them.
- Learned about tenant advisory boards and councils. Get back to grass roots sharing of info.
- Diversity of approaches
- Think big, don't limit possibilities to only what I think can happen.
- That the community organizations in the County are not well drawn to each other.
- Speak their language.
- There are more places, things and areas to volunteer for/at.
- The steps involved to starting/organizing a project within the community.



- That housing projects had "councils."
- Programs available in the community
- How to work with low-income communities
- Other plans
- Networking
- How there are other organizations that are working towards the same goals and how we can work together
- Team up with Sharron Wabby.
- How to involve low-income to project

What do you plan to do differently or more effectively in your life/job as a result of this training?

- Be extremely careful not to talk down to people.
- I want to be able to communicate with all individuals with respect. I hope to be a more effective communicator.
- Target a new audience of potential volunteers.
- Make goal specific, not too big. Target an area to begin the project/job. Seek a community leader/organization and ask for support.
- Be more active in dealing with low-income communities.
- Network more with community partners/agencies on projects.
- Get goals and objectives down before implementing. I need to network more.
- Learn more form it and add things to it. Be as helpful as I can.
- Make smaller, more attainable goals.
- Be more patient and understanding with low-income people.
- Stick with it, don't give up.
- Will help me as we are a new organization starting out
- Set up plans for all projects before implementing.
- Work with other organizations and focus on the specific needs.
- Listen more.
- Engage more community.

I would like to see a future seminar on...?

- Motivation
- Writing, additional info on working in low-income audiences
- Retaining volunteers.
- Recruitment of recent retirees. Retention.
- Maintaining continuity in volunteer projects.
- Projects in this area that have worked
- Jobs, careers work
- Volunteer recruitment
- Overcoming barriers in low-income communities, more about programs that utilize volunteers, up and coming projects
- Board development
- Applying the grants best financial institutions, resources to "get" \$\$\$ from- in-kind donations, etc.



If you are a VMA member and currently do not attend the six meetings held each year, why are you not active?

- Right now it is very hard for me to be committed because of my small children. I hope to become more involved in the future. PS I really don't have a good excuse.
- This year the meeting time conflicted with when I needed to facilitate Raising a Thinking Child sessions for at least two of the scheduled meetings. I intend to be more active.
- New to the profession, will be looking into membership.
- I have just more involve, gotten more information about this VMA meeting(s).
- Was unfamiliar with the organization.
- Didn't know about it.
- I'm not a member, but will become one.
- I am a member, but have lots of scheduling conflicts so I probably only attend 3-4 annually.

The following question was asked only in NE:

How will this course lead to improvements in your volunteer program, if at all?

- Not very applicable.
- The type of verbiage to use was helpful.
- Much good info to use—things I hadn't thought about.
- Just to help us educate our poor, ignorant people. . . especially the rich (all of us who can work are rich) who keep people or low-income people.
- Reinforcement of "tough" community issues
- It will help me use the ideas in working with low-income people.
- Assist in understanding how to be actively involved in low-income neighborhoods.
- I work with lots of low-income people, so it helps me know what's motivating for my people, and what is a turn-off or disrespectful.
- Just to make me more aware of the issues of communities in general and how to utilize/collaborate with community members to facilitate growth and development building on existing strengths.
- Clarification of terms.
- More emphasis on the more important methods/items.
- Giving a clearer plan of action to take dealing with volunteers.