american CAMP association®

Volunteerism in a Unified and Transformed Association

Guiding Principles — the Desired Future

- The ACA Board of Directors provides strategic direction for the association — after considering the environment, the needs of the public, and the input of members and customers.
- The ACA Board of Directors then delegates operations to staff and volunteers.
- Volunteer opportunities will be significantly varied and diverse — thus allowing for short- and long-term participation. Opportunities to provide input, provide leadership, or provide task-oriented work will be built into the options for volunteering.
- Operational volunteers will partner with staff to develop and implement the member, customer, and public services of the association.
- Volunteers will be able to easily move in and out of roles as their interest is peaked. There will not be "one-path of progression" or "pipeline of leadership" to serve the organization. Instead this contemporary model will have many spokes, and many ways to indicate the desire to participate in other ways in the association (everything from being considered for board service to participating in a one-time focus group centered on an emerging societal topic).
- Field Offices will have Local Councils of Leaders. These Local COL's will have the unstructured freedom to organize in any way they think best serves the members, customers, and public in their vicinity. Affiliates of the organization will also have this same freedom.
- The structure of volunteer groups could be based upon each unique program or service. For example, ACA's public relations volunteer work could be based on media markets, our government relations volunteer work could be based on the 50 states, and many volunteer networks could be entirely boundary-less. Many states also already have their own state camp associations. ACA would work with these entities as well. Visit http://www.acacamps.org/about/camp-related-organizations for a list of state camp associations.
- Examples of boundary-less volunteer groups are Issue Networks of people who have joined together to work on tackling an emerging issue. These Issue Networks can work virtually and nimbly.
- The formal link between the ACA Board of Directors and the Local Councils of Leaders is a National Council of Leaders. This is a representative group. Each Field Office and each Affiliate designates two people to participate on the NCOL.

Definitions

- Volunteer Development: Educating and empowering volunteers to assume service or leadership roles in the organization, including improving and building volunteer knowledge and competencies.
- Volunteer Management: Organizational oversight for the utilization of volunteers to achieve organizational goals.

Roles and Responsibilities

The 2020 Roles and Responsibilities chart has served as the foundation of the organization's transition and transformation since 2010. That document is a working document and is updated as the organization transformed. The current version is found online at: http://www.acacamps.org/volunteers/LCOL-and-Affiliate-Resources

Entities

ACA Board of Directors

The ACA National Board is a governing and leadership board that serves as the leadership of the association and possesses ultimate corporate accountability. The most important work of the board is to create and perpetually re-create the reason for our organizational existence. The Board, and the entire Board selection and development process functions under the Bylaws of the association.

National Council of Leaders (COL)

A group of volunteers selected from across the country who work together to provide a forum for the internal ACA voices to address both internal and external emerging issues and trends, feedback on ACA Board of Directors action, and generative thinking in order to have relevant and meaningful influence on the work of the association.

ACA Affiliate

A separately incorporated legal entity that enters into a contract with the American Camp Association — known as an "Affiliate Agreement" — in which ACA grants that Affiliate a geographic territory in which to operate in order to enhance positive growth opportunities available to children and adults through organized camp experiences.

Local Councils of Leaders

As described in the Local Councils of Leader Guiding Principles, http://www.acacamps.org/volunteers/LCOL-and-Affiliate-Resources, the purpose of LCOL's are:

> *The individual Local Councils of Leaders are made-up of dedicated volunteers assembled throughout the field with the following purpose and call to action:*
> - *To provide local structure and delivery to further the strategic priorities and vision of ACA, Inc.*
> - *To act as a conduit for communication and transfer of information to and from the local level to the ACA National Council of Leaders.*

The LCOL's have the freedom to organize in any way they think best serves the members, customers, and public in their vicinity. They need not be encumbered to develop a rigid committee and volunteer structure — except in certain situations (*e.g.*, each LCOL and Affiliate would have a Standards Chair). Instead, they will look at the work that needs to be done and mobilize volunteers in any way they desire. All minimum guidelines are described in the Local Councils of Leader Guiding Principles, http://www.acacamps.org/volunteers/LCOL-and-Affiliate-Resources.

It is hoped that partnering with nearby LCOL's and Affiliates will become the norm instead of the exception.

Gone is the expectation that each Local COL and Affiliate will assign a volunteer to serve in a leadership role for each and every initiative of the organization (as an example – each LCOL and Affiliate selecting a Public Policy Chair). Doing so would only perpetuate the boundary-model.

Instead, nationwide initiatives would form a network that makes sense for that program. Public Policy for example, would form a network of volunteers from each state since most public policy issues relevant to the camp community are based on state laws and regulations. PR initiatives might require a network based on major media markets, etc.

National Board Development Committee (BDC)
The BDC is defined in the Bylaws of the association and is the group responsible for developing, cultivating, and nominating individuals to serve on the ACA National Board.

Other National Board Committees and Task Forces
In order to hear as many voices as possible, the Board of Directors will continue to utilize Committees and Task Forces where appropriate to advance and inform their work.

Operational Committees, Task Forces and Issue Networks
While the CEO will continue to utilize traditional Committees and Task Forces to assist with the operations of the organization, we will intentionally expand volunteer opportunities to include boundary-less networks. Nationwide studies such as those conducted by the US Department of Labor have shown that people want to be able to volunteer in short-term, immediately impactful ways. Trends also show that people are becoming quite comfortable with "virtual volunteerism" — that is, providing volunteer service without actually serving in-person with other volunteers. While there will always be a place for traditional longer-term service within the Association (such as serving on the Board of Directors), we are expanding our volunteer options to include virtual, boundary-less, issue-based networks of volunteers who are interested in participating in short- and longer-term projects. For example,

> ACA has as a public policy goal to advocate for the inclusion of the No Child Left Inside Act as Congress reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Many people across the nation are interested in this issue and in advocating for its support. ACA will create an issue network whereby individuals sign up on-line to participate in focus group discussions, advocacy campaigns, and webinars all focused on moving forward this initiative. When ESEA is approved, this issue network will naturally dissolve and others will form on new topics. Many issue networks will be working at the same time.

Volunteer Management and How People Can Volunteer — Desired Future
We will consider methods where individuals can use technology to indicate their willingness to volunteer — in addition to traditional person-to-person contact to volunteer. Speedy follow-up with each volunteer will be a required SOPP (Standard Operating Procedure and Protocol), with the CEO held accountable to responding to volunteer requests in a timely fashion. ACA might consider developing a volunteer web page that includes:
- A volunteer handbook that describes:
    - Basic information about the organization – its history, mission, values and strategic goals;
    - Laws that impact volunteering. For example, Federal and most state laws give special protections to volunteers. The federal Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 protects volunteers from personal liability for harm they cause unintentionally while serving as volunteers.
    - Policies that impact volunteers;
    - SOPPs that volunteers are expected to follow;
    - Information on how volunteers and staff are integrated in the organization;

- o Explanation of any terms, program names or acronyms used by the organization;
- o Volunteer recognition programs.
- Descriptions of all the volunteer opportunities that are available. (Field offices contribute to the same page, thus ensuring that ALL volunteer opportunities of the unified organization are outlined in one place.)
- Form for the individual to complete to indicate their interest. Form might include:
  - o Contact information, including an email address
  - o Current Employer and Job
  - o Previous work or volunteer experience relevant to volunteering with ACA
  - o Description of training or experience that may be pertinent to the volunteer position desired.
  - o Special skills
  - o Preferred volunteer areas (from a drop-down list of available opportunities)
  - o Time commitment they are available
  - o Language/s spoken
  - o Physical limitations we need to consider for their volunteer role
  - o Reason for volunteering
  - o How they heard about ACA's volunteering opportunities
  - o ACA also needs to consider if it wants to require a volunteer disclosure of criminal record statement — and perhaps background checks of ACA volunteers.
- Opportunity to sign up for an RSS feed so that when new volunteer opportunities are posted by ACA, the individual receives notification.

Volunteer Development — Desired Future

The goal is for ACA to have a comprehensive, ongoing annual process to identify emerging leaders across the association. The prospecting, solicitation, and training of ACA members for the Board of Directors nomination process will be a critical element of the charge to the Board Development Committee. Ownership Linkage is imperative and an intentional, cogent process will be developed. ACA, as an association, will apply rigor and self-discipline to evaluate and make recommendations for the future of ACA and to secure thoughtful leadership that is emerging from the field.

Volunteer Recognition — Desired Future

In addition to the national and field office Awards already granted by the organization, ACA will enhance and expand options by creating a more robust and intentional program for recognizing the contributions of volunteers. Ideas might include:

- Using the Web site to list and recognize everyone working on a certain project/program (with the individual's permission of course)
- Field Offices recognizing field volunteers on their pages on the Web site.
- Establishment of a "volunteer of the month" program which is managed virtually
- Establishment of a "volunteer honor roll" which is managed virtually
- Change the "President's Reception" at the National Conference to a reception for all volunteers?
- Annually, the CEO and national President will write to each volunteer's employer recognizing their contributions to the camp community. ?
- Conduct an annual webinar for volunteers to express their thoughts on how ACA can improve the volunteer program, including volunteer recognition.