

## Strategies to create change in Dane County through volunteerism

Volunteerism provides benefits to volunteers, the people and organizations they serve and the community as a whole. By connecting strategic financial investments and well-managed nonprofit organizations with dedicated volunteers, we make measurable progress in all areas of our community's Agenda for Change.

In a recent study\*, Madison ranked highly for the percentage of residents who volunteer, but much lower when ranked by the number of volunteer hours served per resident. What does this mean?



We have an opportunity to increase the volunteer hours served in Dane County, and therefore, to accelerate the progress in the Agenda for Change. Our new Volunteer Engagement Mobilization Plan addresses why people don't volunteer and how we will increase the number of annual volunteer hours in Dane County.

### **The Goal:**

Using research-backed strategies and best practices, we will **increase the number of yearly volunteer service hours in Dane County to 17 million by 2015**. Three main strategies will help us meet this goal:

1. Build awareness of the need for increased volunteerism to solve critical community problems, specifically for work in the Agenda for Change
2. Mobilize diverse groups of potential volunteers to expand the talent pool
3. Improve agency volunteer management practices in recruiting, placing, training and retaining volunteers

# ***Key Strategy:* Build awareness of the need for increased volunteerism to solve critical community problems, specifically for work in the Agenda for Change**

## What problem does this strategy address?

Money alone will not create progress in our community's Agenda for Change. We need to ask Dane County residents to volunteer with greater frequency and persistence to accelerate our success.

- Many non-volunteers don't identify with the "typical" volunteer
- People who don't volunteer don't feel asked to do so
- Often, non-volunteers think they have nothing to contribute
- Infrequent or non-volunteers fear the time commitment of service
- Non-volunteers don't understand the connection between service and community progress
- A negative experience makes people hesitant to volunteer again

## What are the tactics of this strategy?

The tactics for implementing this strategy focus on developing and enhancing opportunities and communicating their connection to lasting change, such as :

- Identify and promote ways that volunteers can make meaningful impacts in every area of our community's Agenda for Change
- Work with agencies to develop opportunities where they don't currently exist
- Promote these opportunities to targeted audiences by showing how the service creates long-lasting, measurable change in Dane County

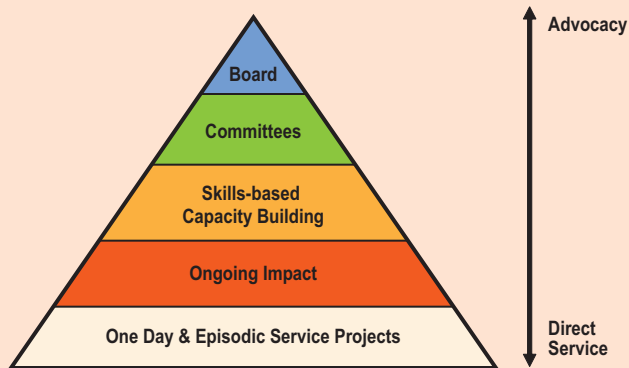
- Students of color achieve at the same rate as white students.
- Children are cared for and have fun as they become prepared for school.
- People's health issues are identified and treated early.
- There is a decrease in homelessness.
- Seniors and people with disabilities are able to stay in their homes.
- There is a reduction in violence toward individuals and families.
- Non-profit agencies and volunteers are strong partners in achieving measurable results.

# Key Strategy: Mobilize diverse groups of potential volunteers to expand the talent pool

## What problem does this strategy address?

The volunteer pool in Dane County needs to include greater diversity in background, age, professional skill set, length of commitment and level of engagement. This will provide expanded volunteer perspectives, commitments and talents in our community.

## Volunteer Segments



## What are the tactics of this strategy?

Create a diverse volunteer workforce, expand the volunteer opportunities available and communicate them effectively:

- Increase opportunities for corporate volunteerism to leverage professional skill sets and connect their impact to our community's Agenda for Change
- Provide leadership opportunities for young professionals and diverse populations who are looking to advance their careers through board or committee involvement
- Develop youth leadership and engagement opportunities to foster a lifetime spirit of volunteer service in young people

# Key Strategy: Improve agency volunteer management practices in recruiting, placing, training and retaining volunteers

## What problem does this strategy address?

One negative volunteer experience can keep a person from volunteering altogether and indefinitely.

Common issues include:

- Mismatch between the volunteer's skills and the work being performed
- Unwelcoming, tense or impersonal atmosphere
- Volunteer's suggestion for improvement is ignored
- Disjointed daily work schedule
- Work didn't match job description
- Volunteer didn't have confidence in his/her skills



## What are the tactics of this strategy?

The focus is on cultivating agency staff expertise in volunteer management. We will position the United Way Volunteer Center and volunteeryourtime.org as premiere local resources for:

- Finding best practices in volunteer management
- Accessing technical assistance related to best practices
- Connecting peer-to-peer learning opportunities
- Innovating volunteer management programs
- Highlighting meaningful volunteer opportunities
- Attending training and networking events
- Coordinating the Professional Development for Nonprofit Managers series

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\*Rankings by the Corporation for National & Community Service, 2008

