AmeriCorps Programs & Working With Volunteers
• Georgia has 21 AmeriCorps programs supporting approximately 500 AmeriCorps members.
• Supporting and promoting volunteers is a big part of every AmeriCorps program.
What’s the impact of service and volunteerism?

- 23,804 persons volunteered for AmeriCorps program activities and projects in 2009.
- Those volunteers contributed 68,042 hours to their communities.
- The 500 AmeriCorps members served 471,701 hours.
- Together, members and volunteers served 156,223 people and logged 539,743 hours.
The statewide picture

- A survey of volunteerism for 2009 ranked Georgia 41\textsuperscript{st} in the nation.
- One in four Georgians volunteered in 2009, a 3% increase over 2008.
- Georgia volunteers contributed 216.8 million hours to their communities in 2009.
- Georgia remains below the national average.
How to find volunteers ~ the “Mission-Based Approach”

Ask this question: “What is the connection between the mission of your organization and your need for volunteers?”

Are volunteers essential, or just something you would like to have?
The mission determines the volunteer recruitment strategy

- Publish / announce the mission and state the goals.
- Who is in charge? Someone has to have authority to make decisions.
- Everyone in the organization needs to know about the project, the goals, etc.
- The project / activities need structure.
“Volunteers are free but they are not cheap!”
The recruitment strategy: Four things to consider

• The volunteers’ commitment to the mission ~ strong, modest, weak?

• The volunteers’ values ~ what are they, do they match the values of the organization?

• The volunteers’ skill set needed ~ high, medium, low? Specialized?

• The volunteers’ interest level ~ is the place, activity where they need to be?
Who will volunteer? And how will they do it?

- The “Silent Generation” ~ 1929 – 1945
- “Baby Boomers” ~ 1946 – 1961-64
- “Generation X” ~ 1965 – 1982
- The “i-Gens” ~ under 12
The Silent Generation ~ Loyalists

- They volunteer more than any other age group
- They have time on their hands
- They have volunteered most of their lives
- Their gift is their experience
- They demand structure, organization, status
- They don’t like change

The Sapphireettes of Burke County, Georgia
Baby Boomers ~ I did it *my* way!

- Huge numbers
- Lots attend church
- Have money, want to have fun
- Ok with technology but not great at it
- Politically active and concerned
- Don’t want to be micro-managed
- Volunteering has to justify their time
- Highly skilled, demand skilled tasks
- Some are re-thinking retirement

President Barack Obama
Generation X ~ Respect my time

- Latch key generation
- High degree of civic involvement
- Low degree of church involvement
- Results- focused
- Accept diversity, change
  Technically literate
- Non- authoritarian
- Multi-taskers
- Organizations without a website are invisible to them
- Self-reliant, flexible, value relationships

R&B Music Artist Usher
Generation Y ~ I’ll build the answers

- Click-and-go gen
- Gen X on fast forward with self esteem
- Confident, ethically diverse
- 89% believe in God but very low church attendance

- Don’t believe in bosses
- Highly entrepreneurial
- Socially responsible
- Change jobs often
- Idealistic, optimistic
- Leave immediately if not rewarded
The i-Gen ~ Show me my future

- They will live with today’s political & environmental decisions
- Gen – X parents bring them everywhere, including to volunteer projects
- May not want to be there
- Know about service learning
- Techno - savvy

Daughter of a Georgia AmeriCorps member
Where do we find volunteers?

- Web and social media for Gen X and younger
- Organizations, churches and businesses for Boomers
- Traditional methods for Silent Gen
Other trends, considerations

- People are generally more anxious and careful about volunteering than previously.
- Volunteers tend to search out good global citizens – and shun dubious ones.
- Issue-oriented volunteering, i.e. environment, recycling, is important niche.
- Disasters – people don’t respond through traditional methods as often as in the past.
What do volunteers say turns them off?

- 40% of those surveyed said they had no authority or status
- 20% said they were powerless
- 33% said the organization didn’t understand them or their needs
- 33% said they didn’t feel their volunteer “job” was real or had meaning
Volunteer program elements

- An orientation or training for volunteers
- Procedures, rules, do’s and don’ts, a safety talk, a brochure, something written about the organization, its history and mission
- A role or position description that matches the goals or expected outcomes
- A trainer, project leader, cheerleader
More important elements

- Volunteer recognition
- Measure the volunteer contribution, both quantitative and qualitative
- Explain how the volunteer effort furthers the mission, contributes to the goal
- Collect stories, images to show the impact
- Change lives!
Some simple but important things

- Keep a record on volunteers such as:
- Name
- Next of kin
- Phone number / email address
- Any special needs?
- Skills
- Updated as of ______
Finally…

• Be a leader!
• Keep promises
• Keep it simple
• Use social media
  or get left behind!
The Georgia Commission for Service and Volunteerism

We fund national service programs like AmeriCorps and support and promote volunteerism in Georgia.