

These are some statistics that can be used during the National Volunteer Week during the recognition of your volunteers or throughout the week to inspire others to volunteer. They statistics were provided by the Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network.

2005 Statistics in Volunteering

September 2004 – September 2005

Reported by Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor

NOTE: Volunteers are defined as persons who did unpaid work (except for expenses) through or for an organization. The following summary of results comes from a monthly survey of about 60,000 households that obtains information on employment and unemployment among the nation's civilian non-institutional population age 16 and over

Volunteer Rate Held Stead

During the past year, 65.4 million people volunteered through or for an organization at least once between September 2004 and September 2005. The proportion of the population who volunteered was 28.8 percent, the same as in each of the prior 2 years.

Volunteer Among Demographic Groups

- About 25 percent of men and 32.4 percent of women did volunteer work, about the same proportions as in the 2 prior years. Women volunteered at a higher rate than men across age groups, education levels, and other major characteristics.
- By age, 35- to 44-year olds were the most likely to volunteer (35.4 percent), closely followed by 45- to 54-year olds (32.7). Teenagers also had a relatively high volunteer rate, 30.4 percents, perhaps reflecting an emphasis on volunteer activities in schools. Volunteer rates were lowest among persons in their early twenties (19.5 percent) and among those age 65 and over (24.8) percent. Within the latter group, volunteer rates decreased as age increased.
- Married persons volunteered at a higher rate (34.1 percent) than never-married persons (23.0 percent) and persons of other marital statuses (23.1 percent).
- Parents with children under age 18 were more likely to volunteer than persons without children of that age, 37.0 percent compared with 25.5 percent.

Volunteer Rate by Education level or Employment

- Among persons 25 years of age and over, the volunteer rates for those with at least some college education or a bachelor's degree or better slightly declined from last

year's survey, while the rates for those whose education had not gone beyond high school graduation rose over the year.

- Almost 64.4 million persons, or 28.8 percent of the civilian non-institutional population age 16 and over, volunteered through or for organizations at some point. Women volunteered at a higher rate than did men, a relationship that held across age groups, education levels, and other major characteristics.
- Overall, 31.1 percent of all employed persons had volunteered during the year ended in September 2005. By comparison, the volunteer rates of persons who were unemployed (26.4 percent) or not in the labor force (24.4 percent) were lower. Among the employed, part-time workers were more likely than full-time workers to have participated in volunteer activities--38.2 percent and 29.8 percent, respectively.

Volunteer Hours

- Volunteers spent a median of 50 hours on volunteer activities during the period, slightly down from the level in the three previous surveys. Men spent 52 hours and women spent 50 hours doing volunteer work, no change from the previous survey period.
- Among the age groups, volunteers age 65 and over devoted the most time—a median of 96 hours -- to volunteer activities up from 88 hours from the previous survey period. Those age 16 to 19 and 25 to 34 years spent the least time, volunteering a median of 36 hours during the year, no change from the previous survey period.

Volunteering by Organization

- Most volunteers were involved with one or two organizations--69.6 percent and 18.9 percent, respectively. Individuals with higher educational attainment were more likely to volunteer for multiple organizations than were individuals with less education.
- The organization for which the volunteer worked the most hours during the year--was either religious (34.8 percent of all volunteers) or educational/youth-service related (26.2 percent). Another 13.4 percent of volunteers performed activities mainly for social or community service organizations
- Older volunteers were more likely to work mainly for religious organizations than were their younger counterparts. For example, 45.0 percent of volunteers age 65 and over performed volunteer activities mainly through or for a religious organization, compared with 27.5 percent of volunteers age 16 to 24 years. Younger individuals were more likely to volunteer for educational or youth service organizations.
- Among volunteers with children under 18 years, 45.2 percent of mothers and 36.1 percent of fathers volunteered mainly for an educational/youth-service related organization, such as a school or sports team. Parents were more than twice as likely to volunteer for such organizations as persons with no children of that age—51.5 and 21.6 percent, respectively. Conversely, volunteers with no children under

18 were considerably more likely to volunteer for some other types of organizations, such as social or community service organizations.

- Two in five volunteers became involved with the main organization for which they did volunteer work on their own initiative; that is, they approached the organization. Almost 42 percent were asked to become a volunteer, most often by someone in the organization.

Volunteer Activities

- Volunteers reported more than one activity they performed for their main organization. Fundraising was the most commonly reported activity (29.7 percent), followed by collecting, preparing, distributing, or serving food (26.3) percent), engaging in general labor or supplying transportation to people (22.5) percent), and tutoring or teaching (21.3 percent).
- Educational attainment influenced the types of activities volunteers performed. People with higher levels of education were more likely to provide professional or management assistance, tutor or teach, mentor youth, coach referee, or supervise sports teams, or provide counseling, medical care, fire/EMS, or protective services. They were less likely to collect, prepare distribute, or serve food, or be an usher, greeter, or minister.
- Parents were considerably more likely than those without children to engage in several types of volunteer activities—fundraising, tutoring or teaching, mentoring youth, and coaching, refereeing, or supervising sports teams. This may be because parents often volunteer for organizations in which their children are involved.

How Volunteers Became Involved with Mai Organization

- Two in five volunteers became involved with the main organization for which they did volunteer work on their own initiative; that is, they approached the organization. A slightly larger proportion, almost 43 percent was asked to volunteer, most often by someone in the organization.

Reasons for Not Volunteering

- Among those who had volunteered at some point in the past, the most common reason given for not volunteering in the year ended September 2005 was lack of time (45.6 percent), followed by health or medical problems (15.2 percent) and family responsibilities or childcare problems (9.3 percent). Lack of time was the most common reason for all groups except those age 65, who reported health or medical problems as the primary reason for not volunteering.

