

# CoC 201: Promoting Volunteerism

## Practical Tips for Encouraging Volunteer Participants

November 2021



# Acknowledgements

- ❑ Credits for Material in this session
  - ❑ DonorBox. Org
  - ❑ Tobi Johnson, Find your Next 20 Volunteer Superstars
  - ❑ United Way – Volunteer Center
  - ❑ Gallery photos

# Purpose

- Encourage volunteerism by CoC and ESG program participants
- Offer practical tips for engaging and retaining volunteers
- Support CoC and ESG recipient agencies in managing volunteers
- Promote empowerment and self esteem through active service



# Outline

- What do volunteers mean to you and your organization?
- Ways to motivate and engage volunteers
- Finding volunteer superstars
- Managing conflict of interest
- Examples of formal and informal volunteer roles

# The A, B, Cs of Volunteerism

- ❖ What do your volunteers mean to you?
  - How you engage and motivate volunteers rests on what they mean to you.
- ❖ What are your assumptions and beliefs about volunteers?
  - What is your belief about how volunteers fit into your organization. Are they:
    - Unpaid staff?
    - Free labor, but low-skilled?
    - Helpful but should not be relied on?
    - Worth the time it takes to train, nurture and supervise?
    - Are they a necessary evil? (like fuel in an airplane that weighs a lot but is needed?)

# What Does Volunteering Mean to Them?

- ❖ The volunteers assumptions and beliefs influence what they expect and how they contribute.
  
- ❖ What are their assumptions about how they fit into your organization? Are they:
  - Unpaid staff?
  - Willing to help but do not want to feel obligated?
  - Willing to spend the time it takes to train, nurture and supervise?
  - Filling a 'void' in their lives?
  - Seeing themselves as free labor to the organization?
  - Feeling they have something valuable to offer?
  - Feeling that the organization values them?

# Compare A and B

- ❖ Compare the assumptions and beliefs of the organization and the volunteer
  - In what ways are they similar?
  - How do they differ?
- ❖ How will this impact your plan, use, and engagement with volunteers?
- ❖ Before you jump to any conclusions, you have some thinking to do.
- ❖ Think rationally

# Thinking Rationally- Data and Dollars

- ❖ Consider the value that volunteers do or could bring financially
  - Think of volunteers as 'money in the bank'
  - A direct monetary donation of \$10,000 is easy to recognize
  - What is the value of 1,000 hours of volunteer time?
    - National average of more than \$25.43 per hour\*
    - Total value for 8 hours per week is \$10,579
    - Base the value on your agencies data:
      - Absent the volunteer, what paid worker would do the tasks/hours?
      - What is their pay? Do the math.

# Beyond the Dollars

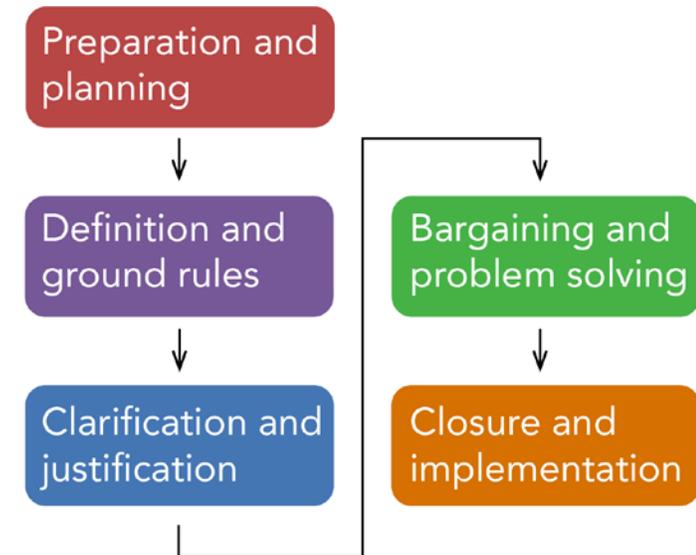
- ❖ Consider the less tangible contributions that volunteers contribute.
- ❖ What value-Plus does the volunteer bring?
  - Contacts, outreach and awareness in the broader community
  - Fostering political will
  - A fresh perspective that can raise questions, improve delivery
  - Name some other examples from your experience

# Volunteers are Valuable, Now What?

- ❖ **Volunteers can make valuable contributions to your organization.**
- ❖ **How do you engage and motivate volunteers?**
- ❖ **How can you encourage and prepare program participants to volunteer?**
- ❖ **What are special considerations when the participant volunteers with the agency providing services to them?**

# Motivating and Engage Volunteers

- ❖ Prepare for them in advance
- ❖ It's more than just their "job"
- ❖ Design a multi-faceted program specifically for them
  - Planning - roles and tasks
  - Ground rules
  - Clarification of expectations
  - Nurturing and problem solving
  - Celebrate beginnings and endings
  - Departing and closure – (you'll miss them)



# Non-financial Compensation

- ❖ How do you 'pay' the volunteer for their investment?
  - Show your appreciation
  - Value your volunteers' time
  - Play to their strengths
  - Communicate and listen to their feedback
  - Give volunteers the training and resources they need
  - Cultivate your volunteers for other, bigger roles



# Participants as Volunteers

- Participation of persons with recent lived experience is required in the CoC program
- Recent was identified as within the last 7 years in the 2021 CoC Competition)
- What are some opportunities and approaches in supporting program participants as volunteers?
  - Internally
  - Externally
- Let's go back to the A,B,C your assumptions about volunteers / participants

# Supporting Participants as Volunteers

- ❖ Let's go back to the A,B,C
  - Are your assumptions and beliefs about participant volunteers different from those about other volunteers?
  - Do you assume that program volunteers are less capable than others?
- ❖ Many people who are 'housed' struggle with issues similar to participants
  - Loss, substance use, mental and physical health challenges, survivors of DV or human trafficking, other trauma or challenges
- ❖ All people have common human needs (Maslow)
  - People do not all have the same resources, social networks, etc. to fill those needs

# What's the Difference?

- ❖ Differences between program participants as volunteers and other volunteers:
  - Program participants know you “from the inside”.
  - Have needed to depend on your organization – often for basic tangible needs
  - May feel obligated because they have received help
  - May be worried about being judged and losing services
  - May have a shorter or longer term of relationship with your organization
  - May have to spend more time /energy to meet basic needs

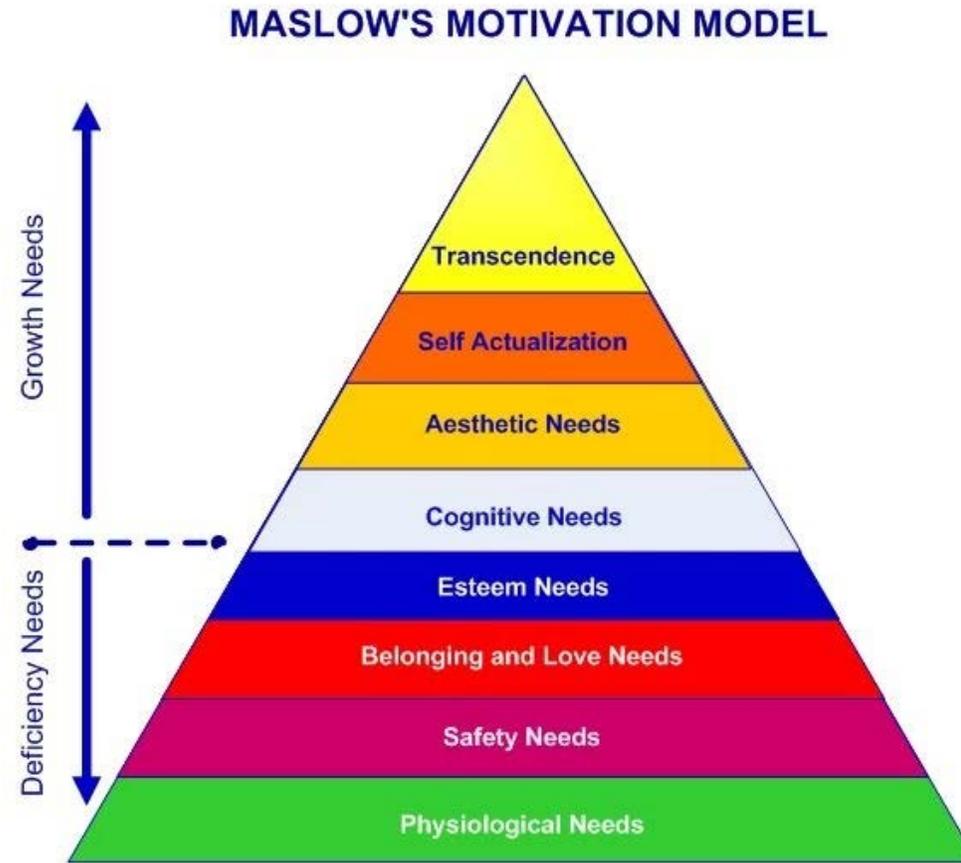
# Basic Needs and Motivation

Maslow's original hierarchy expanded version shows how need and motivation fit together.

Unmet basic needs can contribute to challenges in functioning

Fulling basic needs helps support growth

Notice that belonging (affiliation) and self-esteem are basic needs



# How Volunteering Helps

- ❖ **Contributes to filling Maslow's hierarchy and generating motivation**
  - **Sense of belonging**
  - **Sense of purpose**
  - **Social connection**
  - **Learning or practicing new skills**
  - **Seeing tangible accomplishments**
  - **Practicing skills**
  - **Learning to structure time and energy**
  - **Decision making**
  - **Contribution to community**

# Maintaining Confidentiality - with ALL

- ❖ Program participants also know other people who are “on the inside”.
- ❖ Maintaining confidentiality for the participant volunteer with other volunteers and other program participants should be emphasized.
- ❖ Maintaining confidentiality should be emphasized for all volunteers.
  - Having information about each other is a privilege
  - Ensuring confidentiality for all is crucial
- ❖ Agency should have clear guidelines about what kind of personal information is shared (phone numbers, addresses, personal history) and with whom.

# Exploring Opportunities with the Agency

- **Related to HUD Mandates**
  - **Rules require involvement in decision-making role for persons with lived experience**
  - **Encourages participation in rating and review**
  - **PITC often need hundreds of volunteers, persons with lived experience can be helpful in framing questions, training other volunteers on how to approach unsheltered persons, helping to 'translate' the survey experience, identify high-density areas or hidden alcove**
- **Ask the volunteer for their ideas to expand opportunities**
- **Say thank you for their ideas and thank them again for willingness to volunteer.**

# Connecting with External Opportunities

- Some ways to explore other volunteer opportunities:
  - In San Diego, NPWorks.org lists volunteer, part-time, and other opportunities
  - Organizations with recruitment / training such as United Way Volunteer Services
  - Community bulletin boards
  - Mentoring and advocacy organizations
  - Social media, list serve, and interagency outreach
  - Faith-based organizations

# Common Settings

Some common settings or roles for volunteers with limited time, unable to make ongoing commitment, or focused on basic skills include:

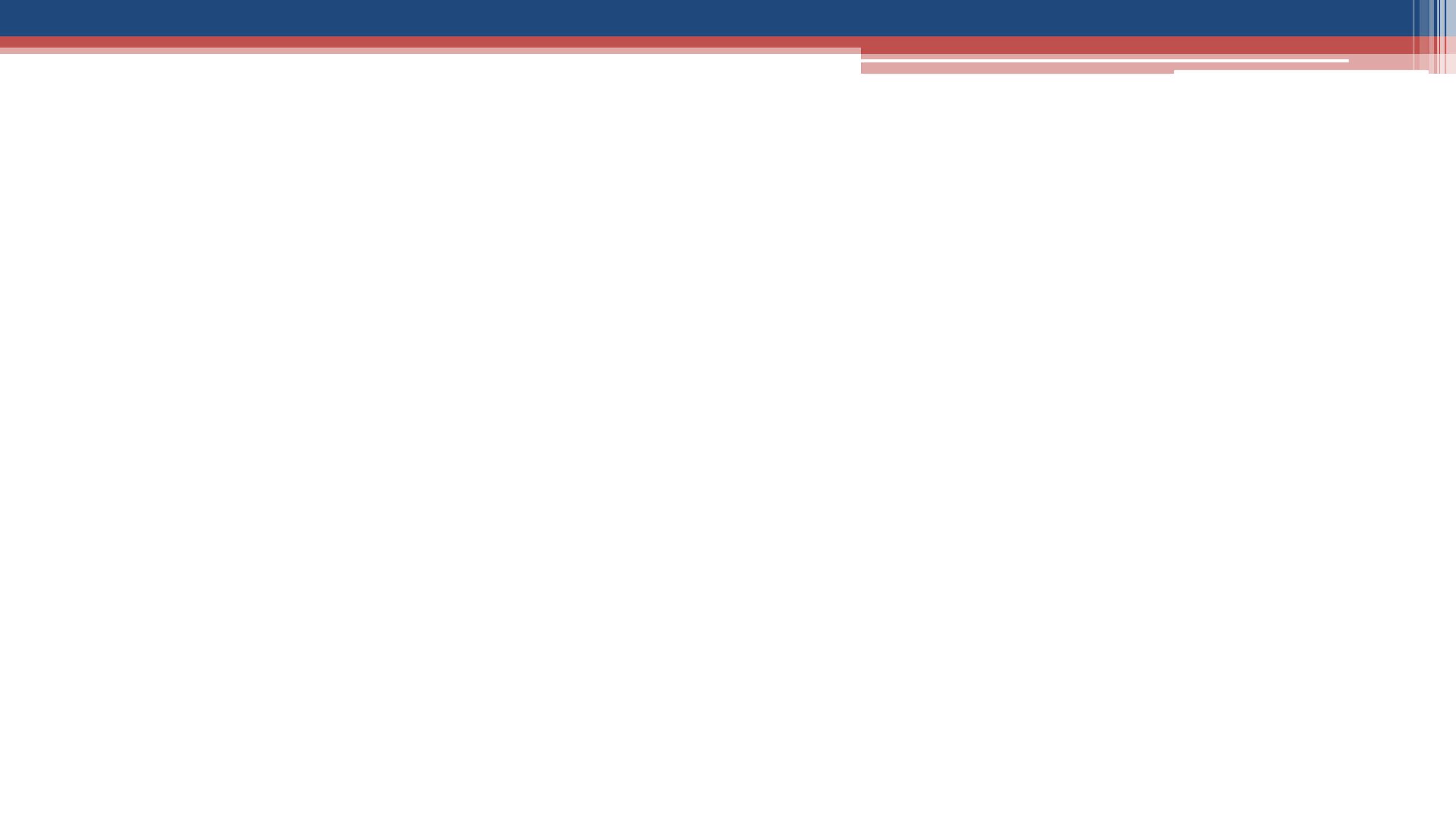
- Housekeeping /Cleaning service
- Yard work
- Food delivery or food pantry staff
- Clothing distribution
- Data entry
- Advocacy with local decision-makers
- Voter /Ballot stations
- Dog walking
- Informal security

Many more! – What would you add?

# Reminders

- You gotta' love 'em
- Know their value
- More than the tasks they do
- Appreciate their unique gifts
- Please and Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!





Please let us know if you have ideas,  
questions, or comments

**Thank you for participating in training !**



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