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ReStore Volunteers A 'Hand Up' for the Worcester Community

An Interactive Qualifying Project

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ABSTRACT

Nonprofit organizations rely heavily on the efforts of volunteers. The goal of this project was to facilitate the increase of Habitat for Humanity MetroWest /Greater Worcester ReStore's volunteers by making recommendations for recruitment and retention strategies. We found that there are potential volunteers who are interested and available at times when ReStore most needs additional volunteers. We recommend several strategies that would allow ReStore to tailor recruitment activities toward students and older adults by appealing to their respective motivations and availability. We compiled a list of recruitment and retention strategies to use for future recruitment efforts.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2008 housing market crash affected millions in the U.S. from January 2007 to December 2011. There were more than 4 million completed home foreclosures and more than 8.2 million foreclosure applications (Bennett, 2012). With more families losing homes each day, there are organizations working to combat the issue. From homeless shelters, awareness campaigns, and building organizations, there are many nonprofit organizations willing to help. Being non-profits, these organizations rely on the efforts of donations and volunteers. With more families needing help, there is an increased need for volunteers and donations.

We collaborated with Habitat for Humanity MetroWest/ Greater Worcester ReStore, a nonprofit organization that sells new and gently used building materials, furniture, and appliances to raise money for local build projects. Habitat for Humanity and its ReStore serve a vital role in the community as they provide housing for low income families and improve neighborhoods in the city. Our goal was to facilitate ReStore's recruitment and retention strategies for potential volunteers. Volunteers are the lifeblood of nonprofit organizations like Restore and play an essential role in their success. We hope that this project improves Habitat for Humanity MetroWest/ Greater Worcester ReStore's volunteer recruitment and retention strategies in 2014 and builds a stepping-stone for the future.

Methodology

The Habitat for Humanity MetroWest/Greater Worcester ReStore requested a study on volunteering recruitment and retention. We developed the following objectives in order to achieve our goal:

1. Observed the daily operations of ReStore as a volunteer
2. Identified the current trends of volunteers at ReStore
3. Assessed motivations and availability of current and potential volunteers
4. Developed recommendations for volunteer recruitment and retention
5. Conducted outreach and recruitment activities for ReStore

Our project has implications for our sponsors Habitat for Humanity MetroWest/Greater Worcester ReStore, other Habitat for Humanity ReStores, and potential Habitat for Humanity homeowners. We conducted interviews with all these groups during our research to gauge their opinions on our plans. In order to accurately assess the ReStore volunteer experience and motivations of potential and current volunteers, and to develop an expanded outreach plan for ReStore, we completed the following tasks

- We immersed ourselves as volunteers to observe the daily operations of ReStore
- We restructured and analyzed ReStore's volunteering database to identify the current trends of volunteers at ReStore.
- We distributed online surveys to potential volunteers and short questionnaires to current volunteers to assess their motivations and availability. We then analyzed the data we received.
- We conducted a focus group of high school students to assess their motivations and availability on volunteering.

- We interviewed Directors of other ReStores, high school service group advisors, and employees of Habitat for Humanity MetroWest/Greater Worcester ReStore to help us develop recommendations for recruitment and retention.
- We updated ReStore's stock of promotional presentation materials to improve the recruitment process and focus on key demographics.
- We recruited volunteers from local high schools including St. John's High School and organizations such as the American Legion.
- We produced an infomercial for the ReStore to use for recruiting volunteers and other promotional activities
- We compiled a series of our recommendations on recruiting and retention strategies along with useful contacts of local organizations that we obtained over the course of the project and presented them to Molly Pietrantonio, the Volunteer Coordinator at ReStore.

Findings

The findings we generated from objective 1: *Observed the daily operations of ReStore as a volunteer* stem off of our immersion week. All of these findings came from personal conversations with other volunteers along with our individual direct observations. Some findings were general findings while some highlighted areas of improvement.

- It is very easy to meet new people during volunteer hours at the ReStore due to the friendly workplace culture.
- Volunteers enjoy working in groups while moving donations and accomplishing specific tasks.
- Volunteers enjoy working alongside the staff to complete daily operations.
- Volunteers can choose between donation pickup, donations processing, and/or customer service.
- Volunteer hours are very flexible. There are two scheduled volunteer slots from 9:30a.m. to 1:30p.m. and 1:00p.m. to 5:00p.m.. Volunteers can also come in anytime and stay for as long as they please.

- From cleaning donations, to bringing them onto the floor, to assisting customers, there is always volunteer work to be done.
- Volunteers are always looking for direction from paid staff.
- Some days are busier than others for volunteers; both the number of donations that arrive and the number of volunteers in a day vary considerably.
- Customers rely on volunteers for direction around the ReStore.
- Volunteers inform customers about the other aspects/perks of the ReStore including free donation pickup and various discounts around the store.
- Experienced volunteers provide guidance for new volunteers.
- Items brought to the ReStore move in and out quickly due to a consistent flow of customers.
- Completing projects and seeing donations move in and out quickly motivates volunteers because they can see their work make a difference.
- There is a large recycling campaign at ReStore to save materials from landfills.

The findings generated from objective 2: *Identified the current trends of volunteers at ReStore* came from our updated ReStore database. Data analysis showed current trends of ReStore volunteers within the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

- ReStore experiences two large downtrends in volunteers during the winter months of December-February as well as the summer months of June-August. The number of volunteers dropped from 298 in November to 205 in December, 226 in January, and 136 in February. After the winter months, the number of volunteers increased to 306 in March and 332 in April. All of the winter months are below the tracked monthly average of 253. Since ReStore only recently started tracking this information, we were unable to verify the summer month's downtrend. The only summer month we had data for, August, had 229 volunteers compared to the average of 253 volunteers

for the tracked months. However, our group and Ms. Maruca Hoak hypothesized for the downtrend in the summer months to be related to the local colleges ending class sessions for summer vacation.

The findings generated from objective 3: *Assessed motivations and availability of current and potential volunteers* came from our potential volunteer surveys distributed to students and older adults. Questionnaires came from current volunteers at the restore. The focus group information came from our focus groups held with St. Johns high school.

- In terms of months of the year, potential volunteers stated they are most available during May-July.
- They are most available on Saturdays and Sundays, as well as being more available in the afternoon daily
- Out of 192 responses, we found the main reasons for volunteering were service learning/school (39 responses), friends/family (37 responses), and free time (32 responses).
- They stated they would prefer gifts (apparel), instead of discounts and recognition (ex. Volunteer of the month).
- We found that volunteers most associate volunteering with helping others, altruism, and socializing.
- Current volunteers said that the friendly atmosphere at ReStore kept them coming back.
- Older adults stated on the questionnaires that they volunteer because of free time.
- In our focus group of High school students, they said the social aspect of volunteering was important to them.
- We also found that high school students are unlikely to volunteer during the summer unless it is an organized school/social activity.

The findings from objective 4: *Developed recommendations for volunteer recruitment and retention* came from interviews held with Mike Foley, Werner Thissen, as well as personal conversations with volunteers at both MetroWest/Greater Worcester and Leominster volunteers.

- High school students respond better to short and to-the-point presentations.
- Colleges are not the best resource for recruitment due to busy schedules, leadership turnover within college organizations, and the downtrend of college students in Worcester during the summer.
- Older adults respond to the mentoring aspect of volunteering.
- PowerPoint presentations are often an ineffective media to present with because we found PowerPoint presentations do not stimulate students' and older adults' interest.
- The most functional media for presenting is video because it is clear, concise, and is visually and audibly pleasing.
- There is a strong response to emotional testimony's from families affected.
- Consistent tracking of volunteers is beneficial for retention because the ReStore can properly recognize regular volunteers' efforts.

The findings from objective 5: *Conducted outreach and recruitment activities for ReStore* came from our observations during our outreach efforts.

- We found widespread interest and enthusiasm for volunteering at the ReStore among both of our key target populations, older adults and students.
- We found that our outreach activities coincided well with and could be integrated into the activities of the volunteer coordinator at ReStore.
- Bringing a ReStore coordinator to talk about ReStore background information while we talked about personal experiences was an effective strategy.
- It is important to bring handouts and brochures to leave potential volunteers with ReStore information.

Recommendations

Through our findings, we developed recommendations for ReStore to facilitate the recruitment and retention of potential volunteers. The recommendations are organized below into recruitment recommendations and retention recommendations respectively.

RECRUITMENT

- We recommend ReStore establish volunteer programs at local high schools.
- We recommend that ReStore try to establish consistent volunteer programs at St. John's High School Shrewsbury and Worcester Academy.
- We recommend ReStore market the social aspect of volunteering.
- We recommend a monthly Sunday Volunteer Day due to the increased availability of potential volunteers. This day consists of reorganization of the ReStore and to get ahead on donations processing.
- We recommend that ReStore update and gear presentations to students and older adults.
- We also recommend that ReStore use the ReStore Infomercial that was designed as a recruitment tool.
- We recommend enhancing branding within the ReStore following some of the practices from Leominster's ReStore.
- We recommend that ReStore market its flexible hours to potential volunteers

RETENTION

- We recommend that ReStore set up a list of daily, weekly, and yearly tasks for volunteers according to their commitment level.
- We recommend that ReStore contact local colleges and high schools at the beginning of each academic year.
- We recommend that ReStore generate a recognition program.
- We recommend that ReStore expand their volunteer tracking information

Conclusion

The goal of this project was to facilitate the recruitment and retention of potential volunteers at the MetroWest/Greater Worcester ReStore. Our objectives worked out to be a sufficient road map to climb towards our goal. With information on the current volunteer status at ReStore, data from our surveys, and advice from other interviews and focus groups, we developed recommendations for recruitment and retention to facilitate the increase of volunteers at ReStore. Finally, we began an ongoing outreach campaign targeting both students and older adults. We were able to represent ReStore as if we were staff due to our group's ability to embody the ReStore mission. With all of our findings and recommendations, we hope that the recruitment and retention efforts of MetroWest/Greater Worcester ReStore will continue to grow and expand.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The 2008 housing market crash affected millions in the United States. From January 2007 to December 2011, there were more than 4 million completed home foreclosures and more than 8.2 million foreclosure applications (Bennett, 2012). Consequently, the foreclosures led to widespread insecurity about housing. A community can rise to aid those unable to find stable housing. When someone is in need, the community has the power to help. It is these opportunities in which humanity can truly shine. Nonprofit organizations such as Habitat for Humanity are often at the front lines of the battle against homelessness.

Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit organization with the goal to build safe, decent, affordable housing for families in need ("Habitat's Vision: A World Where Everyone Has a Decent Place to Live," 2014). As of 2012, more than 1.6 billion people live in substandard homes ("Annual Report 2012," 2012). Since Habitat's inception in 1976, it has helped over 750,000 families become homeowners ("Annual Report 2012," 2012).

Habitat for Humanity uses many resources to accomplish its mission. The organization has affiliates all over the world, each of which is partially supported by their local ReStore, a store dedicated to selling new and gently used furniture, home accessories, building materials, and appliances. The purpose of this Interactive Qualifying Project is to assist the MetroWest/Greater Worcester Habitat for Humanity ReStore ("At the ReStore," 2014) in the development of strong volunteer recruitment and retention strategies. Alex Pollack, Habitat's former Volunteer Coordinator, explained that ReStore revenues fund around one house locally a year. Debbie Moruca Hoak, ReStore's Director, wants to expand ReStore's pool of 'regular volunteers'; someone who comes to the local ReStore at least three times a month. The hope is

that by having a team of regular volunteers, the local ReStore will be able to operate at its full potential, maximizing its efforts to aid the local Habitat for Humanity build projects.

In chapter two we describe the evolution of nonprofit organizations, the benefits of nonprofits on communities, and nonprofit management structures. In this chapter we also discuss the importance of the volunteer to the nonprofit industry and explore different motivations for volunteering. We explore different volunteer recruitment strategies and the characteristics of an efficient volunteer program and conclude the chapter with a review of the importance of the volunteer program for the ReStore.

In chapter three we describe our methodological approach to completing our project goal. The main goal of this project was to facilitate the increase of Habitat for Humanity MetroWest/Greater Worcester ReStore's volunteers by making recommendations for recruitment and retention strategies. We accomplished our goal by achieving five separate objectives: (1) Observed the daily operations of ReStore as a volunteer, (2) Identified the current trends of volunteers at ReStore, (3) Assessed motivations and availability of current and potential volunteers, (4) Developed recommendations for volunteer recruitment and retention, (5) Conducted outreach and recruitment activities for ReStore. In chapter four we explain the findings from our methodologies, which include the importance of the friendly atmosphere in retaining volunteers and importance lessons about the most effective mediums to use for volunteer recruitment presentations. Finally, in chapter five we present our recommendations and final conclusions.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

America has a rich tradition of citizens stepping up and fighting for its cultural ideals of “Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.” From Susan B. Anthony to Martin Luther King Jr., Americans continuously work to improve the society in which they live. This is one of the reasons why nonprofit community based organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, Salvation Army and Young Men’s Christian Association have flourished. Nonprofit organizations are groups organized for purposes other than generating profit and in which no part of the organization's income goes to its members, directors, or officers ("Non-profit Organizations," 2014). Recruitment and retention of the specific volunteer demographics is a critical part of nonprofits such as ReStore. A consistent flow of dedicated volunteers at the volunteers can directly contribute to the mission of Habitat for Humanity.

In this chapter, we discuss the management and role of volunteers in nonprofit organizations. In section I, we discuss nonprofits’ structure and their contributions to society. In section II, we analyze the motivations behind volunteering, exploring whether volunteers are motivated by their core values or by personal incentives. Next, we highlight how to use volunteer demographics for recruitment and other volunteer recruitment strategies showcasing some successful and unsuccessful ones. Later in the chapter, we examine volunteer management and the different steps required to successfully retain volunteers by presenting good management techniques as well as revealing how mismanagement leads to volunteer loss. Finally, we summarize the background literature and define our goal for this project.

Evolution of Nonprofit Organizations

Nonprofit organizations are established to fill societal needs and have evolved to fit into a diverse array of communities. Nonprofits grew during the post-World War II economic upswing in the United States. The number of nonprofits increased from 80,250 in 1945 to 309,000 in 1967, a 385% increase (Powell & Steinberg, 2006). Organizations would consistently grow at the same rate over the next two decades. The total number of nonprofits nearly quadrupled from 1967 to 1996, from 309,000 to 1,188,510, again a 385% increase (Powell & Steinberg, 2006). From 2000 to 2010, nonprofits grew 23.6% increasing the number of organizations in the U.S. from 1.26 million to 1.56 million (Blackwood, 2012). The growth of nonprofits correlates to the growth of wealth in the United States, technological innovations, an increase in philanthropy, and a need for non-government social services.

In the 1980's, the number of nonprofits increased significantly due to the cut in government spending on welfare and the end of the Cold War (Anheier, 2005). In 1981, Ronald Reagan cut welfare spending in an effort to decrease the national budget (Ferejohn, 1991). With the government unable to provide for all of its citizens, the nonprofit sector stepped in to fill the social service needs of the public. The end of the Cold War saw the growth of nonprofits moving their charity works across borders and becoming larger international organizations.

Even with the massive expansion in the nonprofit sector, organizations needed to update their technology for better efficiency. The most notable innovation prior to 1995 was the mass availability of televisions to facilitate the commercialization of nonprofits. The Internet completely changed the nonprofit landscape. Bob Carter, a nonprofit industry consultant, explains that the Internet has balanced out the field, allowing small not for profit organizations to

be recognized as easily as the larger not-for-profit organizations (Carter, 2000). Major reductions in the cost of communication, in particular the internet, increased information sharing while reducing coordinating and organizing costs overall (Anheier, 2005). The Internet enables nonprofits to receive instant online donations, keep donors updated with upcoming events, share information on day to day activities, and take advantage of new marketing tools like Twitter, Facebook, and Groupon (Bertagnoli, 2011). If nonprofits made a commitment to social media, they could cut marketing costs while simultaneously reaching a broader audience (Laratro, 2009). Revealing technological advancements can help the nonprofit industry if effectively utilized. These technological advancements help the nonprofit industry streamline their operations and increase their ability to aid society.

a. The Benefit of the Nonprofit Organization

Nonprofit organizations aim to meet the needs of communities by providing them with social services that the government fails to offer. The funding given to nonprofits goes towards overhead and services they provide the community (Cordery, Baskerville, & Porter, 2011). The not-for-profits nonprofit status allows them to completely focus on the community instead of focusing on the bottom line like for-profit businesses. Nonprofits are tax-exempt, thus they do not have to pay taxes on the money they raise. Many large international organizations such as the American Red Cross, Habitat for Humanity, and the Salvation Army have local branches enabling them to focus on specific community problems. Nonprofit organizations' ability to assess and address local needs is vital for a nonprofits work to be successful.

When nonprofits respond to local service needs, publicly funded services can go into the correct area of need. An example is local health care needs provided at minimum cost to the

recipients of health care (Cordery et al., 2011). Nonprofits do this at a minimum cost because they must disclose all information on costs and quality of services. Nonprofits must disclose information publicly when submitting their tax exemption form to the IRS. For-profit companies can artificially inflate costs of services due to the ability to withhold cost and service information. Organizations with nonprofit status are also a benefit because people who give monetary or physical donations also receive tax deductions. This makes members of the community more willing to donate to their cause. Another benefit of nonprofits is that they work with communities to help improve their local societies, which in turn improves nonprofit support (2010). For example, Habitat for Humanity builds homes for low-income families. This helps create better neighborhoods in cities and promotes Habitat as an organization that is seeking to improve the community. Thus, nonprofit organizations' success relies on the communities in which they work.

b. Nonprofit Organization Structures

In 2005, H.K. Anheier discusses how the structure of a nonprofit relates to its operations and success. Many successful nonprofit organizations utilize hybrid business management models. Hybrid models are a combination between a hierarchy and a network. A hierarchal organization has centralized decision-making, top-down approaches to management, a low span of control for middle management, and an emphasis on vertical relations among staff. A networking organization emphasizes decentralization and bottom-up approaches in decision-making, and encourages work groups as well as horizontal relations among staff and management. Hybrid organizations combine different components of these two models to guarantee their success and efficiency. Successful management is not the controlling but the creative and enabling arm of nonprofit organizations (Anheier, 2005).

The challenge for nonprofits is to find an organizational structure that showcases the organization's identity and gives employees a sense of cohesion (Anheier, 2005). The Salvation Army has been recognized as one of the highest rated nonprofit organizations as evidenced by its earning an A rating by the American Institute of Philanthropy (Borochoff, 2014). Charities were rated on financial efficiency, accountability, governance, and fundraising. The Salvation Army's faith-based hybrid hierarchal structure showcases the organization's identity and gives employees a sense of cohesion. The military-inspired job titles within the company showcases the organization's identity. The leader of the Salvation Army is the "General" and other management positions in the organization are officers with the titles of lieutenant, captain, major, lieutenant colonel, colonel, and commissioner ("The Salvation Army - Who We Are," 2014).

Employees must experience two years of extensive training to enter into the Salvation Army as an officer. The strong devotion illustrates the organization's faith-based commitment and also the level of commitment expected from employees. The lowest rank in the Salvation Army team is a "soldier." A soldier is a volunteer who gives an extreme commitment to the organization. A volunteer takes an oath to remain committed to the organization and its ideals and are essentially an unpaid employee. Soldiers continuously volunteer at Salvation Army, and also commit to the faith-based aspect of the organization. For example, soldiers abstain from the use of alcoholic beverages, drugs, and tobacco. The level of commitment from volunteers sets The Salvation Army apart from other nonprofits.

Nonprofits need management and structure like any for profit organization. If nonprofits utilize business structure correctly, they can efficiently use incoming volunteers. The structure of the nonprofit should anticipate the need of volunteers. Just like the Salvation Army, volunteers are crucial to the success of nonprofits.

Volunteering in Nonprofits

Volunteers are the lifeblood of nonprofit organizations. Volunteer hours in U.S. nonprofits were equivalent to 8.9 million full time employees in 2011 (Blackwood, 2012). With competitive wages, the volunteer hours were worth \$296.2 billion which is roughly the same amount as donations (Blackwood, 2012). Thus, volunteer labor and donations serve as equal importance to nonprofits. Smaller nonprofits bring in revenue of less than \$100,000 (Francis & Talansky, 2012) and rely almost exclusively on volunteer labor to fulfill the organizational mission (Jager, Kreutzer, & Beyes, 2009). Volunteer work keeps many nonprofits afloat; without volunteer labor, nonprofits would not be able to function effectively. Volunteers contribute to nonprofits more than volunteers working with for-profit organizations (Paço, 2013).

This section highlights the main reasons people volunteer for nonprofits. People volunteer for altruistic reasons. Altruism is the unselfish concern for the wellness of others. People also volunteer because of their core values. Core values are principles that guide a person's internal conduct. Potential volunteers respond to personal incentives. An incentive is an item or idea that motivates or encourages someone to do something. Volunteers volunteer to fulfill mandated service requirements. Knowing why people volunteer is crucial to understanding how to recruit volunteers.

a. Service through Institutions

Volunteers working for nonprofits are motivated by morals and a desire for social change (Paço, 2013). Many people volunteer because of this motivation to serve the community in which they live, work, or go to school. Others volunteer because their school, work, or religious organization requires it. Serving the community includes voluntary work to help people in a

specific geographic area. Some people serve because of a sincere concern for the well being of the community. Nonprofit organizations look for volunteers with this altruistic attitude.

Certain groups within society embody a strong urge to serve the community. The ‘collective goods’ model of motivation for collegiate volunteering claims there is a societal demand for charitable contributions and people will collectively meet that demand (Tomkovick, Lester, Flunker, & Wells, 2008). Volunteering requirements at the high school level aim to get students volunteering as soon and as often as possible. The Stafford County Public Schools in Virginia teach students about volunteerism through the Learn and Serve America Program, integrating community service projects with classroom learning (Widhalm, 2007). In 2007, the state of Maryland required high school students to complete 75 service hours before graduating. Similarly, the District of Columbia school system required 100 hours of service for the students (Widhalm, 2007). Teaching students more about their community keeps students aware of issues within the community. The Learn and Serve America Program teaches workplace skills like teamwork, responsibility, and problem solving. As a result, students who volunteer gain real-world abilities (Widhalm, 2007).

Volunteers who served in the past are more likely to volunteer in the future. A 2008 study conducted on 131 alumni of a regional Midwest university found that past volunteering was the most powerful determinant of future volunteerism behavior (Tomkovick et al., 2008). Students are more willing to volunteer in the future if the student does not feel the program they volunteered with had micromanaged their services (Stukas, Snyder, & Clary, 1999). In 2009, David Eisner, CEO of the Corporation for National & Community Service, stated, “...16 to 19 year olds are twice as likely to volunteer [today] as they were in the 1970s.” Between 1990 and

2007, the Learn and Serve America Program saw a 36 percent increase in high schools including service as part of learning (Widhalm, 2007). Through high school requirements, a feeling of individual responsibility and programs like Learn and Serve America, humanity is serving the community. If nonprofit organizations can get people to take the first step in volunteering, the organization is more likely to retain the volunteer.

b. Personal Incentives

People volunteer for a variety of incentives such as pursuing employability, fulfilling social outlets, and expressing core values. A nonprofit can offer material incentives to volunteers, or the volunteer can serve to improve him or herself in some indirect way. Some examples of the way personal incentives are manifested in nonprofit organizations are illustrated in the following sections.

Volunteering to Further Employability

Students are looking to volunteer to add to their resume and in turn increase their employability. For example, in 2010, the British Journal of Educational Studies polled students of multiple demographic backgrounds regarding the students' motivation for volunteering. The demographics consisted of students of both genders; students polled were white, Asian, black, older than 25, younger than 25, medical students, science students, humanities, and social science students. 3,083 participants across six universities ranked on a scale of 1-5 how much they agreed with the following motivations for volunteering: employability, opportunity, and values. Most students identified with the employability motivation, followed by values, and then opportunity as seen in Figure 1 (Holdsworth, 2010). From Figure 1, students less than 25 years

old viewed volunteering for its potential employability, while people 25 and older viewed volunteering for its values.

Table 1 – Poll Results of Students on Volunteering Motivations (Holdsworth, 2010)

Characteristic	Employability	Values	Opportunity
Men	3.74	3.60	2.96
Women	3.94	3.57	2.79
White	3.82	3.47	2.77
Asian	4.14	3.95	3.29
Black	4.22	4.31	2.96
Less than 25 years	3.91	3.50	2.86
25 and older	3.74	3.85	2.75
Medical Students	3.96	3.69	2.89
Science Students	3.78	3.51	2.91
Humanities and Social Science	3.89	3.57	2.81
Overall Mean	3.88	3.58	2.84

Students volunteering have ulterior motives to further themselves such as attaining new skills and acquiring experience. In May 2003, the Center for Information, Advice, and Training (CINFO) in Switzerland interviewed 118 young adults who contacted CINFO over the previous year regarding international volunteering. The most common motive for volunteering was “gaining experience, and advancing oneself” (Rehberg, 2005). The study showed that students with competitive degrees such as pre-medical and students entering a university straight from high school are more likely to volunteer to enhance their employability. Students from ethnic minorities as well as students from less prestigious universities also pointed to the employability rationale for volunteering (Holdsworth, 2010).

Volunteering as a Social Outlet

In addition to employability, values, and opportunity, people seek to make social connections through volunteering. Paola Zappa (Zappa & Zavarrone, 2010) analyzed the

relationship between social interaction amongst 100 volunteers working for non-profit organizations and their satisfaction with what they are doing. The nonprofit organization provided primary healthcare to a small urban community of approximately 30,000 residents in Northern Italy. The study found that the social aspect of volunteering encouraged people to serve and added to the satisfaction of volunteers.

Volunteers are especially satisfied when they have the opportunity to be really involved in the organization they are volunteering with and the staff they are working alongside (Zappa & Zavarrone, 2010). The positive working environment stems from co-worker interaction and informal friendships. This particular aspect of social networking has been proven to influence either work related satisfaction or relational satisfaction within the organization. Positive experiences through new relationships and camaraderie encourage spoken word recruitment for the respective organization.

Volunteering to Express Core Values

Rather than responding to incentives, some people volunteer to express their fundamental beliefs. In a 2003 study conducted with 118 young adults in Switzerland, 36 percent of respondents used the words “help” or “helping” when talking about motivations for international volunteering (Rehberg, 2005). People express their personal values when looking to help people. ‘Value-expressive function’ allows the individual to act on his or her underlying values to show his or her true self. People can express their values through community service. The individual can strictly express core values or pass them on to others through volunteering. Religious beliefs and involvement lead to a greater likelihood of volunteering (Bussell & Forbes, 2002).

Members of religious communities who are dedicated to their church and faith are more likely to volunteer. A Christian denomination study conducted in 1995 showed that Catholics and liberal Protestants involved with their church translated to continuing activism (Wilson & Janoski, 1995). Also, individuals respond more positively to service that matches their motivational concern and is relatable to how they were raised (Lee & Brudney, 2012). A study done on volunteers in a telephone crisis-counseling agency showed that adult volunteers who reported childhood experiences of nurturing and altruism exhibited a greater degree of long-term helping (Clary & Miller, 1986). This contributes to the lifelong habit of volunteering and when a person's parents exhibit altruistic behavior, the children are likely to be altruistic as well.

Another study done in Indiana compared religious volunteerism and non-religious volunteerism. The study found that in general, religious beliefs do not exclusively motivate individuals. People put wisdom and salvation as the two greatest predictors of volunteering for church driven volunteering; pleasure was also a lower predictor of volunteering for religious volunteers (Wymer, 1997). The fundamental beliefs gained through religious involvement, family involvement, and upbringing, all affect the core values that influence an individual to volunteer.

c. Employer-Supported Volunteering

Although employees have many different core values, businesses often offer employees volunteering opportunities. Volunteer activities are an opportunity to take an enjoyable break from work and everyday life (Gary, Philip, & Laura, 2000). Recognizing that time commitments for volunteering is challenging, more companies are allowing employees to take time off to support volunteer work.

An example of an initiative that encourages corporate volunteering and the connection between business and society includes the British company Business in the Community (BITC) (Bussell & Forbes, 2002). BITC helps link community and its business organization members by arranging activities for employees on weekends, or afterhours, and donates money to charities for which employees volunteer (Bussell & Forbes). Employer-supported volunteering tends to be employee-led, usually in the employees own time, unpaid, and encouraged by the employer but not compulsory. An employer's direct involvement works in sync with projects chosen to match the organizations' needs and as a personal development tool. In 2001, a survey by UK officials estimated that 15,000 UK organizations participated in employer-supported or direct employer involvement of this voluntary work (Bussell & Forbes, 2002).

Volunteers develop people skills through service. Volunteering shows ways of communicating more effectively with a diverse group of people. Communication is very important in cross-functional teams (Gary et al., 2000). Employees involved in work-sponsored volunteering develop networks with other organizations within the government and/or private sector (Bussell & Forbes, 2002). Employees build networks with other organizations for possible future employability or promotion. Overall, both businesses and employees can benefit from volunteering within the organization. Nonprofit organizations use those concepts when developing their own recruitment strategies.

Volunteer Recruitment

Volunteer recruitment is the process of attracting and inviting people to consider volunteering with an organization (Northrop Grumman Health & United States of, 2005). Understanding the demographics of volunteers, integrating different recruitment strategies, and

consulting other organizations' successful and unsuccessful volunteer recruitment efforts are equally vital in the development in an effective plan of volunteer recruitment. These methods collectively reach into the *who*, the *what*, and the *how* of volunteerism.

a. Volunteer Demographics

A main factor in recruiting volunteers is understanding the demographics of potential volunteers. Age, socioeconomic status, and gender are a few notable characteristics of volunteers, which can indicate patterns regarding volunteerism. In the 2012 U.S. Department of Labor's annual report on volunteering, older adults (ages 45 and older) were the most active age demographic of volunteers in the United States. The proportion of all volunteers in this demographic group steadily increased over a five-year span starting in 2008.

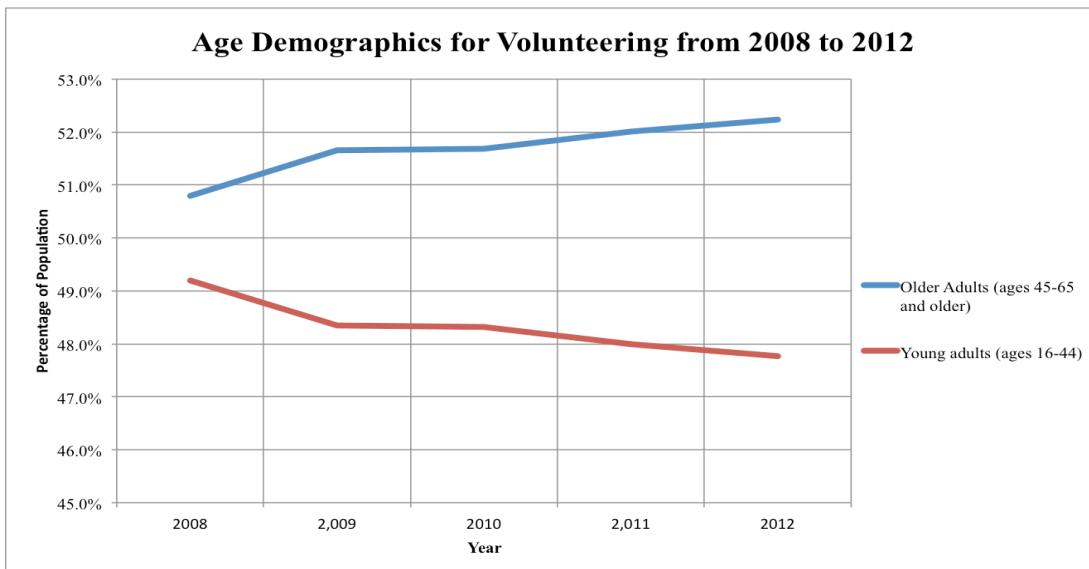


Figure 1 - Age Demographics Five-Trend (US Dept. of Labor, 2013)

As Figure 2 illustrates, younger adults, ages 16 to 44, became less active in volunteering during the 2008-2012 time period, which was the result of hard economic times during the Great Recession of 2008. Socioeconomic status plays a major role in volunteering. With higher

education and more resources, people were more likely to volunteer (Slyke & Johnson, 2006). Because their basic needs are met, volunteers can focus their time and energy helping at various organizations and can provide the necessary devotion to an organization's mission. John Wilson (2000), a professor at Duke University and expert of volunteerism, stated that individuals with higher education will have more prestigious jobs and tend to volunteer more. These individuals get more intrinsic rewards from their work; therefore allowing them to volunteer more often and usually with the company that he or she works at. Wilson (2000) also stated that as personal resources are more abundant, people are more willing to offer their time and/or resources to volunteering campaigns. Terry Woods (2006) suggests in her dissertation on volunteerism that when recruiting an older adult demographic, organizations could construct volunteering as "having fun" or "meeting new friends". Alternatively, organizations could market to a younger demographic by appealing to skill building and networking opportunities.

Gender plays a similar role in the demographic of volunteers. David Slyke and Janet Johnson (2006), professors at the Syracuse University and the Georgia State University respectively, as well as Wilson (2000) noted that women tend to volunteer more than males. This claim is further supported by the 2012 U.S. Department of Labor's annual report on volunteering. The report reveals that, in 2012, of 64,513 volunteers surveyed 57.7 % (37,224) were women and 42.3% (27,289) were men. Women have represented the majority of volunteers for the previous five years (2007-2011) as well. Wilson (2000) accounts women's higher volunteering rates to their altruism and empathy, which influences this demographic "to believe they are expected to care for the personal and emotional needs of others."

These demographics of age, socioeconomic status, and gender are informative when creating targeted volunteer recruitment campaigns. By knowing these characteristics of potential volunteers, organizations can effectively solicit help from these individuals.

b. Recruitment Strategies

Many recruitment strategies rely on two main techniques: ‘Word-of-mouth’ and advertisement via mass media. ‘Word-of-mouth’ techniques and social media sites advertise volunteering as a worthwhile activity that may help develop skills as well as networking opportunities. Nonprofit organizations can effectively reach the public and actively attract and invite people to get involved with volunteerism. With a consistent demand for volunteers, nonprofits to be successful need to integrate certain recruitment strategies to moderate their volunteering needs. People volunteer for incentives including employability, maximizing personal resources, and for certain altruistic initiatives. Therefore, organizations need to identify the motives of the volunteer demographic (Bussell & Forbes, 2002). These nonprofit organizations can deliberately market to these potential volunteers by highlighting how organizations can fulfill a volunteer’s needs and wants. This method cuts costs for organizations and has the potential for attracting many more volunteers (Bekkers, 2005). However, a potential problem for this word-of-mouth method is the accessibility of new volunteers (Bekkers, 2005). Current volunteers most likely have friends that are of the same mindset, and those friends have friends of similar motives as well. In other words, if this method were used, the supply of new volunteers would eventually diminish because volunteers associate mostly with other like-minded individuals.

Organizations can also have their current volunteers recruit new volunteers. Rene Bekkers, the Head of Research and Assistant Professor at the Department of Philanthropic

Studies at VU University Amsterdam, (2005) states this method proves to be quite successful and leads to many new volunteers coming to organizations. She notes that volunteers can ask their friends who tend to have the same characteristics as themselves, which could be very advantageous for organizations needing more of the same caliber of volunteers.

In addition to this word-of-mouth technique, organizations can post announcements on telephone poles, television spots, or social media like Facebook (Hager & Brudney, 2011). With the growth of social media and the Internet, organizations can utilize this new tool to spread the word of their organization and help with their volunteering needs. Collectively, these strategies can help recruit volunteers in a more efficient and effective manner. This strategy has the potential to market the organization to the masses; however, Peter Murk and Jane Stephan, a professor and doctoral fellow at the Department of Educational Leadership at Ball State University, (Murk & Stephan, 1991) found that only 6% of volunteers responded to an advertisement that aimed to recruit volunteers. This finding shows that individuals feel less compelled to volunteer when they are not asked personally by a friend or family member (Murk & Stephan, 1991). Ultimately, nonprofit organizations can consult past successful and unsuccessful recruitment endeavors to efficiently attract and invite new volunteers to get involved in their respective organizations.

Volunteer Management

Once nonprofit organizations successfully recruit volunteers, it is necessary to properly manage volunteers' skills and aspirations. Volunteer management is the overall process in which a company has to decide what the volunteer is doing, where they are located, and how to utilize the skill sets of the volunteer. Nonprofits must diagnose the desires of the volunteers to successfully manage them. The volunteer has an idea of what they wish their service is before

volunteering. The volunteer will eventually not return without fulfillment of the individual's original motivation. The role of the organization is to properly appreciate, lead, and train volunteers to achieve their individual mission statement.

a. Retention Strategies

The goal of nonprofits is to have a high rate of retention from their volunteers, but mismanaging skills leads to an opposite outcome. Most volunteers want their work to be meaningful. Volunteers want to have instant gratification. Businesses no longer get meaningful work out of volunteers. Stuffing envelopes and addressing invitations will not give them the feeling of making a difference (Gelatt, 1992). Volunteers want to feel needed and not be seen as meaningless staff members.

Modern day volunteers have a large array of skill sets, and wish to implement those skills wherever possible. Organizations are often using volunteers with special skill sets for manual labor as opposed to within their area of expertise. For example, businesses send staff members to do simple service tasks, which leads many to a feeling of emptiness about the service they have done (Eisner, Grimm Jr, Maynard, & Washburn, 2009). If the businesses instead sent their staff to utilize their business skills, members are more likely to feel proud of their volunteer work. Organizations who develop volunteer projects with businesses should trust their regular volunteers' ability to handle serious tasks. Accordingly, nonprofit managers may be more successful if they offer more deliberate responsibilities to the people who volunteer; matching them by knowledge and skill to tasks they find more appealing (Gelatt, 1992).

The issue is many organizations do not wish to take the time to discover what skill sets their volunteers have. To keep retention numbers at a maximum, management must put time and

resources into potential screenings of volunteers. Very successful nonprofit organizations such as the Girl Scouts of America use screening as one their main ways to understand its volunteers (Geber, 1991).

Screening helps organizations realize what volunteers' skill sets are available. Although costly, organizations can teach necessary skills when essential. Organizations also can screen for volunteers who already have the necessary skills. These volunteers could aid in teaching other volunteers along the way (Grossman & Furano, 1999). The initial cost of screening is high and time consuming. The goal is that the amount of time and money that is saved in the long run will out weigh the initial costs. Volunteers will also leave with a feeling that the work being complete is important. This feeling will help non-profit organizations achieve retention goals.

Alternatively, noticing your volunteers for their successes will also aid in the achievement of these goals.

b. Proper Leadership

Proper leadership facilitates volunteer retention and boosts volunteer morale. Today, volunteers commonly work alongside paid staff. Volunteer management is a specialty of professional non-profit management (Worth, 2009). Nonprofit organizations' staff members need to understand that working with volunteers is crucial. Unfortunately, nonprofit leadership does not take the time to properly organize their volunteer staff to sustain a rich and exciting atmosphere (Eisner et al., 2009). Volunteers and staff members have the same desires and motivations. The American Red Cross conducted a test during a training orientation in which paid and non-paid members created a list of motivations for volunteering. The lists for paid and non-paid members were the same except the volunteers not having money as a reason (Geber,

1991). The main difference to the organization is that volunteers are part time and not required to be there.

Research shows that organizations that treat volunteers as paid staff have better relationships with their volunteers. Paid staffs have managers who work alongside the team, while many volunteer programs do not. It is important for programs to designate a manager to exclusively work with volunteers (Brudney, 1999). The ability for volunteers to comfortably reveal any issues or concerns to a member of staff greatly improves productivity and volunteer morale. Volunteers gain the feeling of bond within the organization. Management of nonprofit organizations should realize that the volunteer is significant to the organization. “When told of this, the CEO of a large national youth service organization said, ‘I think you’re on to something: 90 percent of our labor is performed by volunteers, yet our strategic plan makes no mention of them’” (Eisner et al., 2009). Organizations that use regular volunteers as leaders amongst new volunteers also see stronger volunteer retention and morale rates amongst volunteers. This shows volunteers that there is an ability to move up in the organization.

Another method is the use of committees to help cultivate leaders amongst volunteers. Committee leaders arise based on who has the time and ability to efficiently volunteer. Time and availability is essential in volunteer leadership programs (Gelatt, 1992). Proper leadership within nonprofit organizations helps the whole process run smoothly. Discovering how much time a volunteer can commit is essential to an organization when designating leadership.

c. Time Commitments

Organizations will be more successful once they understand the amount of time required for each project and choose volunteers accordingly. When a project commences, a time

commitment standard is necessary. When the necessary time commitment is available, volunteers will know if they can fully commit to a project. Volunteers work effectively as long as the task and descriptions are well defined (Whitfield, 2005). It is important for both the volunteer and the organization to understand time constraints. If a volunteer knows their only motive is to complete service hours, organizations must know. It can be difficult for an organization to justify spending time to train and supervise a volunteer who leaves the program soon after starting (Grossman & Furano, 1999). Understanding volunteer's commitment levels will help organizations identify the appropriate amount of time that should be invested in each volunteer.

d. Proper Training

Nonprofit organizations should invest time into volunteers by training them and showing the importance of the tasks at hand. "Volunteers need training to understand the organizations with which they are working, and employees need to be trained to work with volunteers" (Eisner et al., 2009). Investing time in training both staff and volunteers ensures organizational productivity.

Training can range from hands on activities to a simple orientation. An orientation is a short, general learning program designed to provide an overview of the organization and its mission and to expose the volunteers to the organization's culture and method of operations (Brudney, 1999). Returning volunteers are given extensive training. Volunteers need instruction on an ongoing basis otherwise their commitment significantly diminishes (Grossman & Furano, 1999). Investing time in volunteers makes them feel needed. For example, "the Salvation Army teaches its managers and supervisors that they should sit down informally with each volunteer four times a year simply to talk about how things are going" (Geber, 1991).

Generating a relationship over time with each volunteer, the Salvation Army also keeps a file on each member for future job references (Geber, 1991). Invested time in each volunteer is what gives nonprofits a strong sense of community within the organization. When a volunteer finishes with a particular organization, it is important to maintain a positive relationship with the individual. Nonprofit organizations benefit greatly from exit interviews with volunteers who contributed to a significant project. The organization hears what drove the individual to volunteer and what could make the experience more beneficial (Connors, 2011). This information will help the organization in its future recruiting and maintenance of volunteers.

e. Successful Campaigns

Many organizations are successfully using volunteers to achieve the organizations' mission. The March of Dimes is a organization that successfully uses volunteers by recognizing them as a valuable asset to the organization (Eisner et al., 2009). Pleasing the volunteer is what will keep them returning. For example, the Girl Scouts of America use a volunteer agreement form in which volunteers explain their idea of the expectations of the organization to them and vice-versa (Geber, 1991). As a result, both parties understand expectations and determine what volunteers can accomplish while working with the organization. Ultimately, Girls Scouts of America realized that guidance from volunteers helped complete tasks successfully. Different types of nonprofit organizations rely on volunteers and the multitude of services they provided.

Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit organization that needs volunteers to continue their efforts in helping their community residents. Their mission statement, "Seeking to put God's love into action, Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities and hope." They aim to achieve this by bringing the community together by helping one family at a

time. For this reason, Habitat for Humanity established local ReStores around the nation to help fund missions aimed to help people of economic strain to gain homeownership ("Habitat's Vision: A World Where Everyone Has a Decent Place to Live," 2014). These local affiliates sell donated furniture, appliances, building material as well as household goods with the all the profits going directly back into Habitat's mission. Also by selling these items, ReStores are helping reduce waste and ultimately solving some of the pollution problem.

Habitat for Humanity MetroWest/Greater Worcester (abbreviated MW/GW) dedicates them to eliminating substandard housing through rehabilitating and preserving homes. Habitat for Humanity MW/GW's motto states "hand *up*, not a hand *out*". In other words, guiding people in the right direction instead of simply giving helps build the community ("At the ReStore," 2014). To make this possible, the Worcester, Massachusetts ReStore needs volunteers. All aspects of volunteering begin with the volunteer. Unless individuals are willing and ready to help, the efforts of this ReStore will not reach its full potential.

By in large, volunteers are necessary not only for nonprofits like Habitat for Humanity MW/GW, but for the community as a whole. Habitat for Humanity MW/GW ReStore helps combat community problems like homelessness and pollution but need volunteers to assist them in their pursuit to improve society. Consequently, our project looks to identify and implement useful strategies for recruitment and retention of volunteers.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The Habitat for Humanity MetroWest/Greater Worcester ReStore facility moved to its current location in 2011 and is always looking for volunteers. The main goal of this project was to facilitate the increase of habitat for humanity MetroWest/Greater Worcester ReStore's volunteers by making recommendations for recruitment and retention strategies. In order to increase the regular pool of volunteers, our group fulfilled the following five objectives:

1. Observed the daily operations of ReStore as a volunteer
2. Identified the current trends of volunteers at ReStore
3. Assessed motivations and availability of current and potential volunteers
4. Developed recommendations for volunteer recruitment and retention
5. Conducted outreach and recruitment activities for ReStore

In order to achieve these objectives, we immersed ourselves as a volunteer, updated ReStore's volunteer database, distributed surveys to students and older adults as well as questionnaires to current volunteers, held a focus group, conducted interviews, presented to students and older adults, developed a ReStore infomercial, restructured ReStore's PowerPoint presentations, and came up with a list of recommendations for the ReStore. We held a focus group with students from St. John's Shrewsbury High School to gain insight into student availability and volunteer motivations. We conducted interviews to gain information on organizations, clubs, and other ReStores. We distributed a survey to further our understanding of the motivation and availability of prospective and current volunteers. We presented to older adults and students to raise awareness of ReStore and potentially recruit volunteers. We developed a ReStore infomercial as an effective tool for the Restore to use for recruitment in the

future. We restructured ReStore's PowerPoint presentations to tailor to different demographics. Finally, we came up with a list of recommendations for recruitment and retention as a tool for ReStore volunteer coordinators. In Appendix A, we provide the timeline we followed to accomplish our aforementioned objectives

Objective 1: Observed the daily operations of ReStore as a volunteer

In order to identify the current status and daily operations of ReStore, we did an immersion week in which every group member performed the jobs done by current volunteers. The three main tasks we performed were donation pick up, donation processing, and customer service. We took turns doing each job a different day.

We joined Gary Dietrich, ReStore Associate, and Justin McNally, Donations Coordinator, on daily trips to pick up donations from local residences, warehouses, and companies. We helped Gary and Justin load and organize items into the truck. We picked up donations from all around the MetroWest/Greater Worcester area.

When the ReStore truck returned with donations, we unloaded and moved the donations into the processing area. We also helped unload donations at the donation drop off door. After donations were in the ReStore, we tested and cleaned items before they were put onto the sales floor. Once items were priced and ready to be sold, we brought the items to the floor and placed them in their respective aisles. We also helped reorganize shelves and kept the ReStore in order.

For customer service, we walked the floor to familiarize ourselves with the location of items. We were trained by Joan, a regular volunteer, on the location of items throughout the ReStore to get familiar with the floor. We helped customers find specific items in the ReStore and carried out purchased items to customers' cars.

Through immersion week, we gained hands-on experience before we began our recruiting campaign. We better understood what it meant to be a volunteer at the ReStore. Now that we understand what it means to be a ReStore volunteer, we can identify the trends of volunteers at the ReStore.

Objective 2: Identified the current trends of volunteers at ReStore

Before recruiting any new volunteers, we identified the current trends of ReStore volunteers. We spoke with our sponsor Deb Maruca Hoak, ReStore Director, to obtain information on the total number of current volunteers and current volunteer trends. We spoke with the ReStore Director because of her expansive experience at the MetroWest/Greater Worcester ReStore. Ms. Maruca Hoak supplied us with a Microsoft Excel worksheet that had previously entered volunteer data including the name of the volunteer, the date they volunteered, the duration for the day, their sign in time, and their sign out time. This data covered the time span of September 2013 to April 2014. We analyzed and automated the current volunteer tracking database to conceptualize trends over the 2013 fiscal year, starting and ending in July. We automated the data calculations for volunteer times, produced monthly statistics for each month, as well as created a yearly statistics page to depict the yearly trends such as total number of volunteers for a given month. We also created a monthly template to help expedite future data entry of volunteers. With this tracking database in place we began assessing motivations and availability of current and potential volunteers.

Objective 3: Assessed motivations and availability of current and potential volunteers

In order to gain information on the motivations and availability of current and potential volunteers, we distributed surveys to students and older adults and questionnaires to current ReStore volunteers. As well as surveys and questionnaires we held a focus group with students from St. John's Shrewsbury.

The surveys that we administered, as seen in Appendix B, were generated through Qualtrics software. This survey was used to collect data of potential volunteer's motivations and availability. These surveys were distributed via email to students on the WPI campus along with local organizations and companies such as Big Brother Big Sister and Triangle, Inc. These surveys were also distributed as physical copies to students as well as family and friends.

The questionnaires we created as seen in Appendix C was generated via Microsoft Word. The questionnaires were used to see the motivations and availability of current volunteers at the ReStore. We distributed our questionnaires by placing them at the volunteers sign in desk, with an anonymous submission box at the desk. We asked volunteers to fill out the questionnaires after their volunteering experience for the day.

The focus group we held at St. John's Shrewsbury evaluated the motivations and availability of various service leaders at the Catholic high school. The group assembled at campus ministry under the supervision of Mike Foley campus minister. We had a total of ten students made up of two groups of five. We split up the groups in order to have a more personal environment to generate emotional responses from the individuals. We began the conversation with a discussion of past volunteering experiences and service opportunities at St. John's. We

then facilitated the conversation to highlight the motivating factors for why the students volunteered, and when students were most available to volunteer.

Through the surveys, questionnaires, and focus groups we were able to learn more about the motivations and availability of students and older adults. Assessing motivations and availability for our demographics is crucial to the development of recommendations for volunteer recruitment and retention.

Objective 4: Developed recommendations for volunteer recruitment and retention

Using the data collected through the first three objectives, we developed recommendations on recruitment and retention strategies. We developed these recommendations through our observations during immersion week, analyzing the volunteer database for current trends, compiling evidence from our survey and questionnaire data, focus group of high school students, and interviewing club advisors and other ReStore Directors. With these recommendations, ReStore will have strategies for recruiting and retaining prospective groups in order to keep a large, regular pool of volunteers year-round.

Through immersion week, we were able to understand what would enhance the volunteering experience. As volunteers we were able to candidly speak to other volunteers about why they volunteered and what would keep them volunteering at the ReStore. This also enabled us to speak from the heart when discussing the ReStore volunteer experience as we promoted the ReStore during interviews and presentations. With the use of the database we were able to use concrete data to find where improvements could be made in volunteer participation at the

ReStore. The knowledge gained from the database enabled us to focus our recruitment ideas to specific areas.

From the survey data, we were able to quantify through analytics the potential availability and motivations of volunteers. With this data, we were able to create recommendations on specific times of day, days of the week, months of the year that volunteers are most available. We were also able to collect information to recommend what would potentially motivate our different target demographics. Finally we were able to generate recommendations on what would retain volunteers i.e. discounts, gifts, recognition.

The focus group at St. John's High School helped us learn methods to properly present to high school groups to get the most out of presentations. The students also gave us recommendations on motivations of high school students, ideas for retaining high school students, and what the meaning of volunteering is to high school students. The students also recommended that we return to give a presentation to a larger group of service leaders at the school. They also gave us an idea of the times of the day, days of the week, and months of the year that they are motivated and available to volunteer as high school students.

We contacted club advisors at St. John's and Worcester Academy and the Leominster ReStore Director to investigate if they have any methods that could help the ReStore. During the interview with Mike Foley, as seen in Appendix D, we discussed service trends at St. John's High School and ways students get involved. We also spoke with the advisor of the Habitat for Humanity Club, Steve Scott, at Worcester Academy. We discussed why students get involved with the club and why they are so motivated to be involved with the club. We concluded our interview with Mr. Scott about future intentions of the club at the ReStore. Next, we spoke with

Werner Thissen, Director of Retail Operations at Leominster's Habitat for Humanity ReStore. We discussed methods for recruiting and retaining at Leominster's ReStore and took note of how Leominster's ReStore branded itself. We talked to Mr. Thissen about the proper way to present to an audience about volunteering at the ReStore.

We used our recommendations for recruitment and retention to administer an outreach campaign. With these recommendations, we were prepared to present to different demographics. We revisited some previous contacts and reached out to new sources to potentially recruit new volunteers for the ReStore.

Objective 5: Conducted outreach and recruitment activities for ReStore

To promote volunteering at ReStore, we analyzed all the data that we generated from our first four objectives. From this data, experiences, and recommendations, we then were able to properly reach out to potential new volunteers for recruitment. We presented to a group of students at St. John's as well as a group of older adults at the Veterans Council meeting in Worcester. We chose these two groups to evaluate our developed recruitment strategies for our specific demographics. Along with presenting, we updated relationships that the ReStore already had established with local schools including Worcester Academy, Notre Dame Academy, Assumption College, and The College of the Holy Cross. Finally, we generated a ReStore infomercial outlining all aspects of volunteering at the ReStore. With this infomercial, we wanted to leave reusable material for future recruitment efforts.

We conducted two major presentations in order to achieve our outreach goals. The first of which was held at St. Johns Shrewsbury High School. We presented to 18 service leaders from the high school using ReStore video footage and emotional testimonies from our direct observations at the ReStore. The goal of this presentation was to inform the students about the

ReStore and the volunteering opportunities available. The second presentation was to the Veterans Council of Worcester held at the Marine Corps League. We presented to them using our direct observations of older volunteers and what we learned from our previous objectives to be effective presentation methods.

While in contact with groups to present, we updated relationships that ReStore already had. The use of emails, phone calls, and personal visits helped generate new contact information with old relationships. We facilitated the strengthened relationship between the ReStore Volunteer Coordinator Molly Pietrantonio and members of Worcester Academy, St. Johns Shrewsbury, Notre Dame Academy, The College of the Holy Cross, and Assumption College.

The final tool we used in order to conduct ongoing outreach and recruitment for ReStore was the ReStore infomercial. The infomercial was a video we created in order to show potential volunteers the importance of the work they are completing, the ReStore mission, as well as what they may receive from volunteering. It also was created to depict the different aspects of volunteering a volunteer could do while at ReStore. Finally it was used as a tool for volunteers to see what motivates others to volunteer and how to get involved.

Our methodologies helped us formulate multiple findings. The findings from each objective add to the overall goal of facilitating the recruitment and retention of potential volunteers. With these findings, we gave ReStore a list of recommendations to attract these potential volunteers.

CHAPTER 4 : FINDINGS

Throughout our project, we kept revealing new layers of what it means to volunteer. From immersion week, surveys, database analysis, interviews, a focus group, and outreach activities, we gathered as much information as possible to help us learn about volunteering. After we completed our objectives, we had a whole new understanding of what it meant to be a volunteer at ReStore. Some findings reinforced what we had already thought, but for the most part, we needed this new information to facilitate the recruitment and retention of potential volunteers for ReStore.

Objective 1 Findings: The Daily Operations of ReStore Volunteers

Through immersion week, we each took one day to perform each of the three main volunteer tasks: donation pickup, donation processing, and customer service. Through each aspect, we found **it was very easy to meet new people**. During donation pickup, we traveled around the MetroWest/Greater Worcester area with either Gary or Justin. We met with various homeowners, companies, and schools looking to donate items to the ReStore. During pickup, we got to know ReStore staff and the donors on a more personal level and worked together to efficiently fit items into the truck.

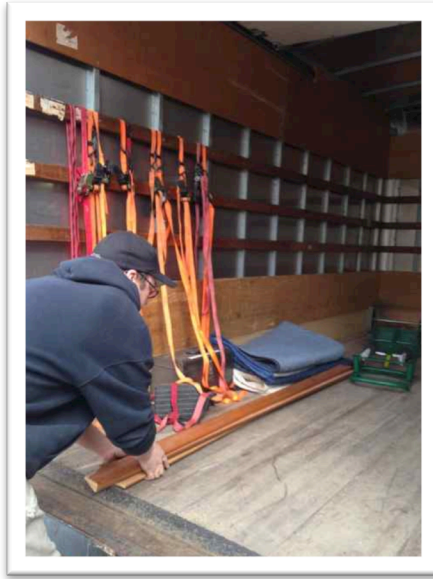


Figure 2 – ReStore Staff Placing Donations into Truck

Volunteers participating in donations processing worked alongside staff and fellow volunteers to test, fix, and/or clean incoming donations. Very often, donations needed more than one person to move an item onto the floor or reorganize shelves on the floor. Working with the same volunteers for a shift established camaraderie and made it easy to get to know one another.



Figure 3 - ReStore Volunteer Working in Donation Processing

For customer service, volunteers helped customers find items around the ReStore and brought them to their car. Volunteers interacted with customers on a personal level. Customers

approached volunteers with nametags often with questions, which led to a very social environment on the floor. From discussions with other volunteers and our own experience, we found **volunteers enjoy working in groups**. Working in groups makes tasks easier, go by faster, and keeps a friendly atmosphere because everybody is in it for the same cause.



Figure 4: ReStore Volunteers Working Together

As a part of the groups of volunteers, we found that **volunteers enjoy working alongside the staff**. In every aspect of volunteering, a member of the staff is willing to give direction and contribute. As noted in our background chapter, staff involvement with volunteer operation leads to a higher retention rate.

We found that a unique aspect of the ReStore is that **volunteers can choose their role during service**.



Figure 5 – ReStore Volunteers Reorganizing the Book Nook

Volunteers can choose their role at ReStore based on age, size, strength, motivation, skills, or just personal preference. Tim, a regular volunteer, comes to the ReStore every Thursday and goes on donation pickup with Gary or Justin. The ReStore is aware of Tim's preference and accommodates accordingly. Jim, another regular volunteer, enjoys fixing items that need small repairs before heading onto the floor. The ReStore accommodates to Jim by setting aside donations for Jim that need to be fixed. Joan, a regular volunteer, prefers to help customers find an item on the floor and explains to customers how fast items on the floor move in and out. Along with choosing how a volunteer wants to serve, we noted **volunteer hours are very flexible**. The volunteer shifts at the ReStore are from 9:30a.m. to 1:30p.m. and 1:00p.m. to 5:00p.m. The ReStore uses these times as guidelines for volunteers to come in, but volunteers are encouraged to come in whenever they are available. The ReStore appreciates any duration of time donated. The times are so flexible because there is always volunteer work to be done.

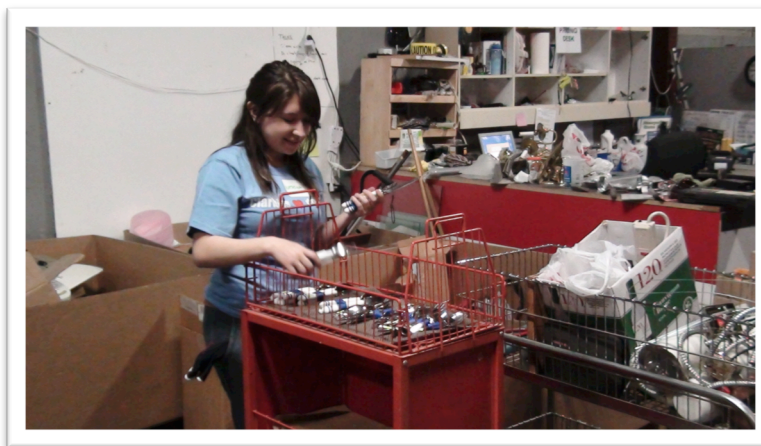


Figure 6 – ReStore Volunteer Sorting Silverware

There is always volunteer work because the ReStore is always moving at a fast pace. Donations are always coming in and going out, and the ReStore always needs volunteers to facilitate this process. From our own experience, we found **volunteers are always looking for direction from paid staff**. Volunteers are looking towards paid staff for direction because the employees are always on top of the donations that come in and out of the ReStore. The employees also have vast knowledge on where items should go in the ReStore, and volunteers always refer to employees when they do not know how to answer a customer's question. When a volunteer does not know what to do, the first person the volunteer asks is a paid employee. The issue with generating tasks for volunteers is **some days are busier than others; both the number of donations that arrive and the number of volunteers in a day**. We noticed when large shipments came to the ReStore, they were typically in the morning and fewer volunteers were present. We noticed that when large groups come in, there were not enough tasks for everybody to do.

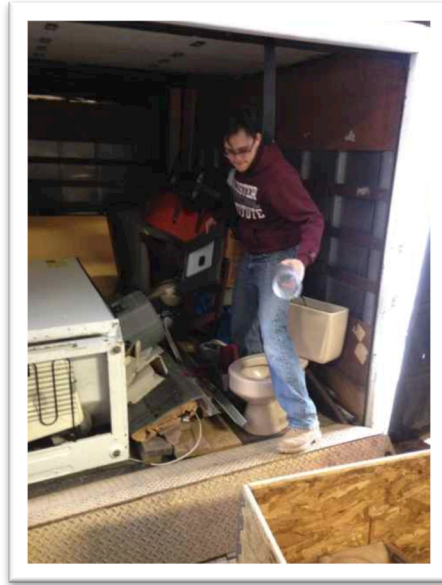


Figure 7 – ReStore Volunteer Unloading the Truck

Some days, volunteers flood the ReStore in groups at a time, and other days the ReStore struggles to get enough volunteers to complete necessary tasks.

Similarly, to how volunteers rely on staff, **customers rely on volunteers for direction around the ReStore**. Even if customers are in the middle of a task, it is normal for a volunteer to drop what they are doing and help a customer. Helping a customer includes carrying a purchased item for them, moving objects such as doors so they can get a better look at them, and giving customers direction around the store. Alternatively, we found that **volunteers inform customers about the other aspects/perks of the ReStore**. For example, there was a customer talking to us about where the items came from. We responded that they come from personal donations and the donation pickup truck. The customer did not know the ReStore had a donation pickup service.



Figure 8 – ReStore Donation Pick Up Truck

In turn, the customer scheduled a donation pickup with Luis Garcia, the Floor Manager, for items he was going to throw away. We also talked to customers who did not realize all profits from the ReStore go directly to the MetroWest/Greater Worcester ReStore. Initially, we came across some difficulty to customers about all aspects of ReStore. We found that **more experienced volunteers provided guidance for new volunteers**. An example of an experienced volunteer is Anita. Anita works at the ‘smalls’ portion of the donation processing area, but has a vast knowledge of the ReStore. Anita shows volunteers how to properly organize and clean new donations; she also is easy to approach about where someone can find an item in the ReStore. Anita is a great resource so the ReStore can keep up with the fast paced retail environment.

We found **items brought to the ReStore move in and out quickly**. No one item will sit on the floor for a long period of time, and those that do are marked down accordingly to keep up with the inflow of donations. This rapid moving environment is what makes the ReStore unique. Talking with fellow volunteers, we discovered that **it was motivating to see the volunteer work**

make a difference. The constant flow of items shows first hand how the items are creating revenue for ReStore and in turn, the build sites.

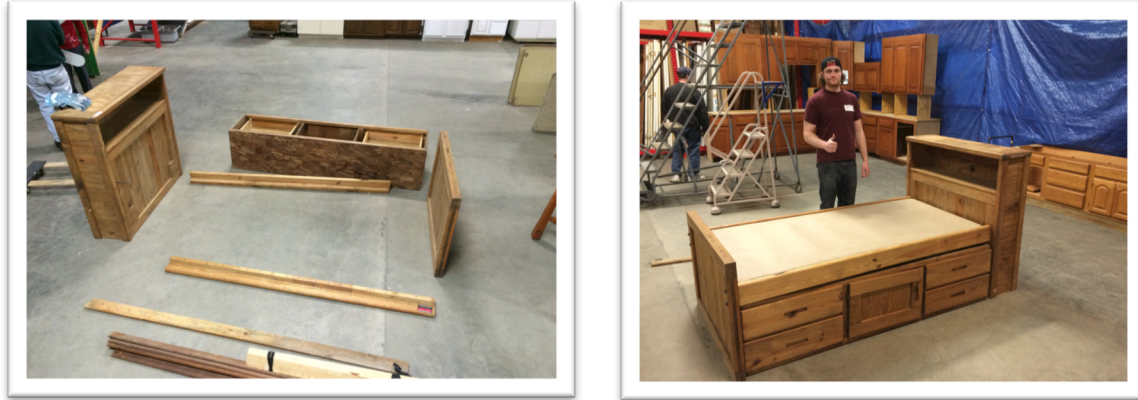


Figure 9 – Before and After of Volunteer Project

Other volunteers saw the environmental side of ReStore. We found that ReStore has a **large recycling campaign to save materials from landfills.** Donors credited saving the environment as a reason for donating. After volunteering for a week at the ReStore, it is apparent that the ReStore makes a significant impact on the environment. After discussing with people whom donated items, many claimed this was the reason they were donating. Many claimed they did not want these perfectly usable items going to waste and harming the environment.

Objective 2 Findings: Current Trends of Volunteers at ReStore

With our discussions with our sponsor Ms. Maruca Hoak, we found that **ReStore experiences two large downtrends in volunteers during the winter months of December-February as well as the summer months of June-August.** We confirmed this through our analysis of ReStore's volunteer tracking database. The number of volunteers dropped from 298 in November to 205 in December, 226 in January, and 136 in February. After the winter months the number of volunteers increased to 306 in March and 332 in April. All of the winter months

are below the tracked monthly average of 253. The ReStore database only contains information from the past 9 months and is, therefore, not as illustrative as it would be with multiple years of data. Since ReStore only recently started tracking this information, we were unable to verify the summer month's downtrend. The only summer month we had data for, August, had 229 volunteers compared to the average of 253 volunteers for the tracked months. However, we hypothesized for the downtrend in the summer months to be related to the local colleges ending class sessions for summer vacation. Ms. Maruca Hoak also had this hypothesis as her own assumptions to this downtrend.

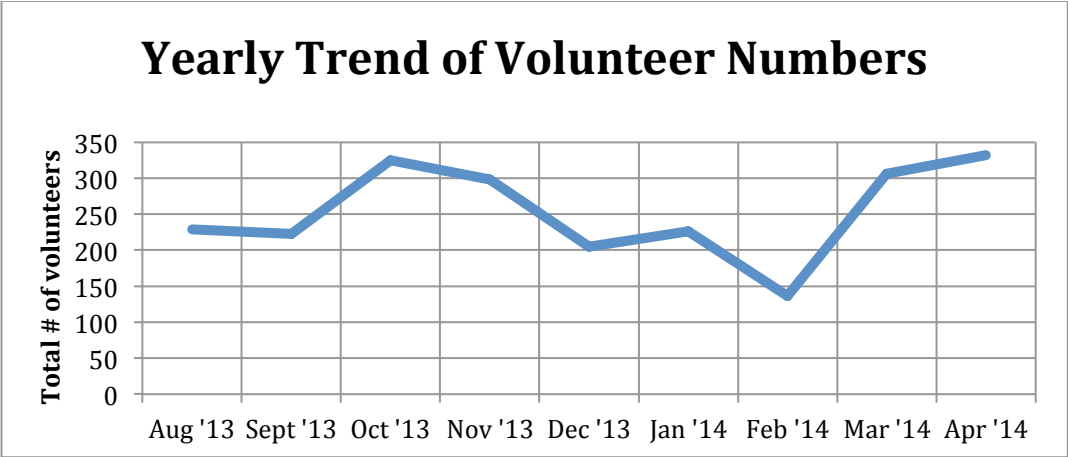


Figure 10 – Yearly Trend of Volunteering Numbers At ReStore

Objective 3 Findings: Motivations and Availability of Current and Potential Volunteers

We were able to get 132 responses from surveys that we distributed through the survey management software, Qualtrics. Appendix B shows the questions that individuals answered. We deduced some important findings about motivations and availability of volunteers after analyzing the survey responses. **In terms of months of the year, potential volunteers stated they are**

most available during May-July. We asked potential volunteers which month they were most available to volunteer. The 4 months of May –July received a surprising 51% of the responses (15% May, 15% June, 11% July, and 10% August).

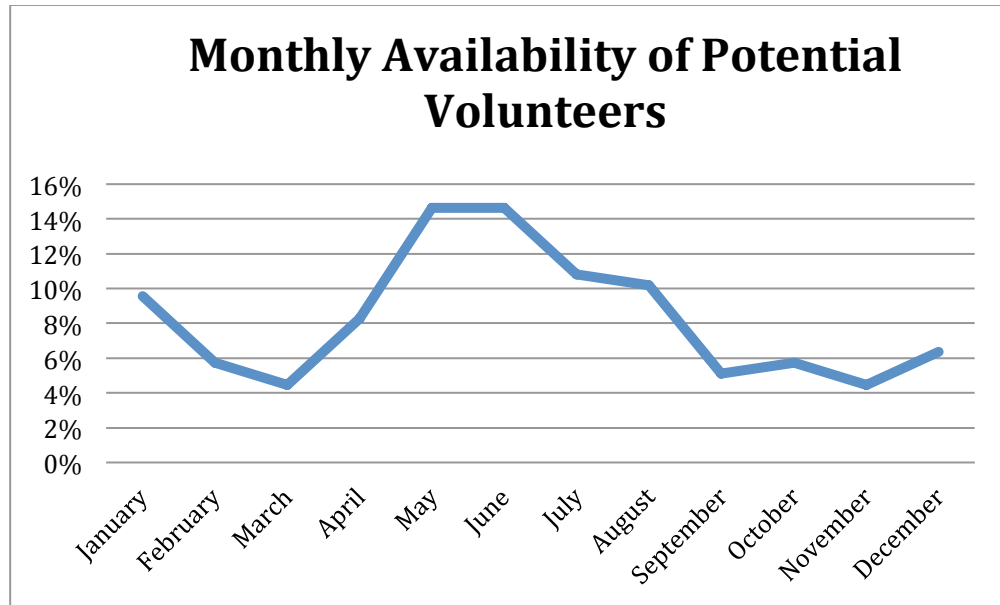


Figure 11 – Monthly Trend of Availability of Potential Volunteers

This was a surprising because the summer months are when ReStore sees a significant drop in volunteering. This discrepancy is probably because many of our survey respondents were college age students. Even though the college students are available in the summer, they may not remain in the Worcester area. This also could be because when school is not in session, it is less likely for people to volunteer because it is not an organized social activity.

We also asked potential and current volunteers when they were most available on a weekly basis. **Potential and current volunteers claimed they were most available on Saturdays and Sundays, as well as more available in the afternoon everyday.** This is an important finding because ReStore is closed on Sundays and is possibly missing out on a volunteering opportunity. We polled current and potential volunteers about their motivations for

volunteering. **Out of 192 responses, we found the main reasons for volunteering were service learning/school (39 responses), friends/family (37 responses), and free time (32 responses).**

A limitation to these responses is that a majority of people polled were from the 18-25 year old age group. However, it is important to take away that a significant portion of them volunteered in the past in groups with their school, friends, or family. In the surveys and questionnaires, we asked volunteers what incentives encouraged them to volunteer. **Volunteers and potential volunteers stated they would prefer gifts (apparel) instead of discounts and recognition (ex. Volunteer of the month).** If ReStore wished to give incentives to encourage volunteers in the future, gifts (apparel) are a proven method of recruitment and retention. The final question that we received data on was “What comes to mind when you think of volunteering?” We made a list of possible adjectives that came to mind when thinking about volunteering. For example: enjoyable, tedious, time-consuming, and social. The respondents checked off as many of these adjectives that applied to their personal experiences. The top 3 responses were Service (87 tallies from the total 132 respondents), Meaningful (86 tallies), and Social (80 tallies). **We found that volunteers most associate volunteering with helping others, altruism, and socializing.**

The short responses on the current volunteers showed, **current volunteers said that the friendly atmosphere at ReStore kept them coming back.** This rang true to us because ReStore staff such as Deb, Donna, Quinn, and ReStore volunteers greeted us with a smile everyday. Volunteering is addicting at ReStore. Even when working on our project at ReStore, we couldn't help but volunteer. The staff was also very helpful with our project telling volunteers to fill out our questionnaire. Staff and regular volunteers willing gave video testimonials for our infomercial. Other survey responses showed that **older adults volunteer because of free time.**

By talking to ReStore regular volunteers such as Anita and Joan, we found that **older adults also want to spend their free time serviceably.**

The final way we assessed motivations and availability of current and potential volunteers was through a focus group of St. John's high school service leaders. **In our focus group, the high school students said the social aspect of volunteering was important to them.** Most St. John's High School service leaders discussed how they enjoyed going to places and meeting new people. They also claimed they preferred going to locations with a group of people and that made volunteering a more enjoyable experience for them.

We also found that **high school students are unlikely to volunteer during the summer unless it is an organized school or social activity.** We asked the students' thoughts on volunteering at ReStore and they expressed interest in getting a weekly program started. However, when asked about volunteering in the summer, the service leaders said it would be difficult because the student is less organized over the summer.

Objective 4 Findings: Recommendations for Volunteer Recruitment and Retention

When developing recommendations for volunteer recruitment and retention, we found multiple useful methods from interviews with Mike Foley and Werner Thissen. Along with interviews, we had personal conversations with volunteers at both MetroWest/Greater Worcester Restore and Leominster ReStore. Speaking with Mike Foley from St. John's Ministry, we discovered that **high school students respond better to short and to the point presentations.** Many students lose focus on long drawn out presentations. After various emails back and forth between college clubs, we have discovered that **colleges are not the best resource for**

recruitment. This is due to the constant changing roles of leadership within these organizations; none of the leaders from the college Habitat for Humanity clubs are reliable enough. We found that **every year colleges change leadership positions, ReStore needs to make new relationships to resume a similar volunteering program.** Alternatively, older adults are a much more reliable resource. From our discussions with older adult volunteers, we found that **older adults respond to the mentoring aspect of volunteering.** Older adults enjoy knowing that someone is willing to learn the skills that they have to offer.

While talking to Werner Thissen from Leominster's ReStore, we discussed the proper way to present ReStore's message to students and older adults. Through this conversation we found **PowerPoint presentations are often an ineffective media to present with.** From past experiences, Mr. Thissen has gotten very little positive response to PowerPoint presentations. Many viewers lose interest quickly from seeing words on a screen, and the message becomes lost. Through Mr. Thissen, we found that the **most usable media for presenting is video.** Video is effective because there is a visual aid attached to the message to keep the potential volunteer's attention. We also found **potential volunteers respond to emotional testimonies from families involved with the Habitat for Humanity build projects.** When potential volunteers can see where their volunteer efforts are going, it gives them an emotional attachment which keeps them coming back. Through Mr. Thissen, we also found that **tracking volunteers is beneficial in retention.** Rewarding a volunteer for the number of hours they volunteered gives a feeling of appreciation. The feeling of importance is what will ensure a volunteer to return. While at Leominster's ReStore, we discovered that **branding ReStore is a tool of recruitment and retention.** On all items sold, there is a tag that says "Shop. Donate. Volunteer." Making ReStore

a brand is a continuous tool for recruitment of potential volunteers; the more people here about ReStore, the easier it is to recruit volunteers.



Figure 12 – Leominster's ReStore Packaging

Leominster's ReStore also uses a meter to display the number of houses Leominster's ReStore funds. Below is the display. This is a tool for retention because the display reminds volunteers of the houses Habitat for Humanity built because of Leominster's ReStore.



Figure 13 – Leominster's ReStore Houses Built Meter Display

Objective 5 Findings: Outreach and Recruitment Activities for ReStore

Through email and phone conversations, we contacted organizations and found **there is interest in volunteering at ReStore for older adults and students.** Places we contacted for outreach include St. John's High School, Worcester academy, Veteran's council of Worcester, Assumption College, College of the Holy Cross, WPI, and Notre Dame Academy. Although not all schools could commit to ReStore right away, we kept contact information for future involvement with ReStore. Schools that were interested, we were able to set up potential regular visits to the ReStore. We found that St. John's was interested in doing weekly visits starting the next school year. Mike Foley, St. John's campus minister, and Molly Pietrantonio, ReStore volunteer coordinator, exchanged information after our presentation.

Worcester Academy Habitat for Humanity club advisor, Steve Scott, committed to a monthly visit to the ReStore after officer elections at the end of the school year. Because students in the Worcester Academy Habitat for Humanity club commit to 60 hours of community service, Mr. Scott wants officers to get students together and volunteer at the local ReStore once a month. We gave Molly Pietrantonio's information to Steve Scott for further endeavors.

Lastly, we took a trip to the Veteran's Council of Worcester and presented to men and women representing 17 different posts. We encouraged the men and women to spread the word about ReStore to the members in their respective posts. We highlighted the fact that they could utilize their skills at the ReStore and teach their skills to other volunteers. We passed out volunteer brochures before we ended the presentation. Assumption College and Holy Cross were in the middle of leadership changes, and were not organized well enough to plan a consistent trip to the ReStore.

We found a ReStore employee wanted to be apart of our outreach activities. Molly Pietrantonio proved to be a valuable asset for our outreach activities. Molly speaks confidently and enthusiastically about ReStore, and has access to volunteer brochures and additional contact information for the ReStore. **Bringing a ReStore coordinator to talk about ReStore background information while we talked about personal experiences was an effective strategy.** Once people knew the background of ReStore, we talked about personal experiences from our immersion week. Students and older adults responded well to our personal experiences. We also found **it is important to bring handouts and brochures to leave potential volunteers with ReStore information.** The brochures leave the people thinking about ReStore and give information that people may not have picked up on during the presentation. Brochures are a constant reminder for potential volunteers about the ReStore.

CHAPTER 5: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Through our findings, we developed recommendations for ReStore to facilitate the recruitment and retention of potential volunteers. The recommendations are organized below into recruitment recommendations and retention recommendations respectively. Some recommendations include multiple findings based off of different objectives to reinforce our recommendations. Other recommendations include further contacts to set up volunteering opportunities.

5.1: Recruitment Recommendations

We recommend ReStore establish volunteer programs at local high schools

As we looked at the volunteer tracking database in Objective #2 we came to the determination that it was evident that ReStore needed to target volunteers during the summer and winter especially during the summer because the ReStore is much busier. **We recommend that ReStore try to establish consistent volunteer programs at St. John's High School Shrewsbury and Worcester Academy.** During our outreach program, these were the two schools we focused on because of their reputation of consistent volunteering and service projects. St. John's said that they would consider ReStore as one of the volunteer sites they send weekly volunteers. Their student service leaders liked how it was different from the other weekly sites they go and would provide a new experience for students.

At Worcester Academy we spoke to Steve Scott, faculty advisor to their Habitat for Humanity club since 2004, about volunteering at the ReStore. He said that the club currently sends students to ReStore over school breaks. We discussed with him possibly changing that to at least once a month, due to the downtrend of volunteers in the winter months. Both schools

seemed interested in volunteering and we put them in contact with Molly Pietrantonio, Volunteer Coordinator at the Worcester ReStore. These volunteering programs can solve the downtrend in volunteers in the winter months. With the friendly atmosphere at ReStore and the consistency that the students volunteer in the program, we hope they will continue to volunteer in the summer.

We recommend Restore market the social aspect of volunteering

In Objective #1, we observed the daily operations of volunteering at ReStore. It was here that we first noticed the importance of the social aspect of volunteering, especially at the ReStore. Everyone we worked with was so friendly, welcoming, and patient with us. It was impossible not to feel accepted at the ReStore. Then in Objective #3, we conducted surveys of potential and current volunteers. “Social” was the third highest responded volunteering related term that we polled potential and current volunteers on, behind Service and Meaningful.

Current volunteers also stated that the reason they kept coming back to ReStore was the friendly atmosphere. In the focus groups that we conducted at St. Johns High School Shrewsbury, student service leaders told us about the importance of the social aspect of volunteering. Service leaders said they preferred volunteering in groups of friends or with families. Students also talked about enjoying volunteering because they get to meet and work with other people to achieve a common goal. The social aspect of volunteering is vital to recruiting and retaining volunteers at ReStore. The great thing is that ReStore already is a friendly, welcoming social environment it’s just important to get the word out there. We recommend that ReStore markets the social aspect of volunteering. They can do this by having current volunteers promote it to their friends, families, and acquaintances to create a “snowball” effect. When ReStore goes out and recruits volunteers, they could possibly bring along a well-spoken member of the target age

group (specifically college students and older adults) to speak from the heart about their personal experiences. During these presentations, they should also highlight how groups are welcome to come and volunteer at the ReStore. Overall, we find it is important for ReStore to market the social aspect of volunteering because it is a perfect environment to bring friends and meet new friends while helping the community.

We recommend a monthly Sunday Volunteer Day

As part of objective #3, we determined the availability and motivations of regular and current volunteers. The days that volunteers were most available were Saturday and Sunday. This makes sense because most people have no commitments on the weekends. Saturday is normally a big volunteer day at the ReStore with many people coming in on their day off. We feel like Sunday could be a volunteer day at the ReStore with many people having a day off and looking to fill their free time. The problem is that the ReStore is closed on Sundays, so volunteers can't come in on this day. We recommend that ReStore have a monthly Sunday Volunteer Day where the retail area of the ReStore is still closed, but volunteers are able to come in and organize items and accept donations. We hope that this will get more volunteers involved with the ReStore who aren't able other days of the week and spread the word about the ReStore.

We recommend that ReStore update and gear presentations to students and older adults

The ReStore presents to various different age groups from high school age students to older adults. We believe that clear and concise presentations are best for student presentations. From our interviews held with Mike Foley and Steve Scott and as seen in objective 4, we found this was the best method. Students often won't pay attention to a presentation for long periods of

time. Short, genuine, and entertaining presentations are best. Methods that work best for students include video footage along with speaking of personal experiences. For example, when we went to St. John's high school, we each spoke about one of our favorite experiences while volunteering at the ReStore.

When presenting to older adults, similar methods work well. As seen in the ReStore Infomercial, video footage with emotional testimonials works best. When presenting to older adults, presentations should express how older adults could teach skills to younger volunteers. For example, volunteer Scott taught us how to work with some areas of electrical that none of us knew how to do beforehand. Along with specific examples, **we also recommend that ReStore use the ReStore Infomercial that was designed as a recruitment tool.** The infomercial depicts ReStore's mission, the roles of volunteers, the importance of volunteers, and testimonials of why people volunteer. The video also explains how to get involved in volunteering. We believe this is a very strong tool the ReStore can use for future recruitment campaigns.

We recommend enhancing branding within the ReStore following some of the practices from Leominster's ReStore

MetroWest/Greater Worcester should attempt to do some of the branding practice Leominster's ReStore has. We outline the Leominster ReStore's branding tactics in our objective 4 findings. Leominster uses ReStore packaging on all of their "smalls" instead of just applying a price tag to them. This packaging has in large font "Shop. Donate. Volunteer." This powerful message can be used as a tool for recruitment because with every purchased item, the customers

are reminded they should volunteer. This will also let customers know that you can donate to ReStore. We discovered many customers do not know this during our immersion week.

We recommend that ReStore market its flexible hours to potential volunteers

From discussions with high school students in our objective 3 findings, we determined that not everyone has four hours to donate at a time, but would still like to help. If ReStore allows students the ability to come in after school or in between classes, students will volunteer for a couple of hours versus being discouraged they cannot work for a full volunteer shift. The best way to market this is to tell students during presentations that they have option of coming in after school, so they are not limited to Saturdays only.

5.2: Retention Recommendations

We recommend that ReStore set up a list of daily, weekly, and yearly tasks for volunteers according to their commitment level.

From our findings in objective 1 and immersion week, we noticed there was a heavy dependence on staff to come up with the next task. We believe if ReStore was to generate tasks for the day, volunteers with any experience could come and complete tasks at the ReStore. IF volunteer completed weekly tasks early, they could move on to larger projects. In turn, there will always be something to do for any volunteer. We recommend regular volunteers strive to complete a yearly goal for the ReStore to always keep busy around the ReStore. Examples of daily goals include the regular operations of ReStore. Weekly goals could include cleaning and organizing all the doors by size. Yearly goals could include reorganizing the whole donations processing area.

We recommend that ReStore contact local colleges and high schools at the beginning of each academic year

If ReStore was to reconnect with the schools that they often lose over the summer months early in the academic year, they could to revive some of the regular visit programs that were previously in place. From our findings in objective 4, we believe contacting colleges such as WPI, Holy Cross, Assumption College, and Clark would leave ReStore with four potential colleges to have regular visitation hours. Mike Foley at St. John’s Shrewsbury and Steve Scott at Worcester Academy are faculty advisors that can set up potential volunteering for the academic year at their respective schools.

We recommend that ReStore generate a recognition program

From our findings in objective 3, survey data, and findings from interviews, we decided a volunteer recognition program is a good retention method for ReStore. Our survey data and background information shows that volunteers like to be recognized. From our survey, we discovered that volunteers appreciate gifts for the work they accomplished. By tracking current volunteers, ReStore could properly supply incentives to committed volunteers after a certain amount of time volunteering. Gifts could include water bottles, t-shirts, hats, or wristbands. All these gifts should have ReStore’s name on them to remind the volunteer of their service at the ReStore.

We recommend that ReStore expand their volunteer tracking information

In addition to what ReStore already keeps track of, ReStore needs to know the specific day of the week the volunteer served and how they found out about ReStore. ReStore could find out more from their volunteer data if they added to the automated database Steven Dang created.

The ability to see what days regular volunteers come to the ReStore would help them plan for groups of volunteers and large donation deliveries. Additionally, knowing where volunteers heard about the ReStore would benefit future recruitment campaigns as well as retention efforts. Contacting where volunteers came from will bring in more volunteers from that area.

5.3: Final Remarks

The goal of this project was to facilitate the recruitment and retention of potential volunteers at the MetroWest/Greater Worcester ReStore. Our objectives worked out to be a sufficient road map to drive us towards our goal. We established a trend of current ReStore volunteers and recommendations for recruiting and retaining volunteers through the volunteer database and our immersion week. We then assessed the motivations and availability of potential volunteers through our potential volunteer survey, ReStore volunteer questionnaire, and various interviews. With information on the current volunteer status at ReStore, data from our surveys, and advice from other interviews and focus groups, we developed recommendations for recruitment and retention to facilitate recruitment at the ReStore.

Finally, we began an ongoing outreach campaign targeting both students and older adults. With the outreach campaign, we established new connections for ReStore. We were able to represent ReStore as if we were staff due to our group's ability to embody the ReStore mission. With all of our findings and recommendations, we hope that the recruitment and retention efforts of MetroWest/Greater Worcester ReStore will continue to grow and expand.

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APPENDIX A: TIMELINE OF PROJECT

Task	Week						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Conducted field study of volunteering jobs at ReStore							
Identified current number of regular volunteers at ReStore							
Assessed motivations and availability of current and potential volunteers							
Developed recommendations for recruitment and retention							
Implemented volunteer recruitment strategies for ReStore							
Prepared report and promotional materials for week 7							

APPENDIX B: SURVEY OF POTENTIAL VOLUNTEERS

Survey of Potential Volunteers

We are a group of students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute working with Habitat for Humanity ReStore. We are conducting this survey to learn about why people of different ages volunteer, and when they are available to do so. We plan to use the information to help ReStore increase its pool of regular volunteers thereby increasing its benefit to the community. Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary and you may skip any question you do not wish to answer. All your answers will remain anonymous.

1.) Are you between the ages of:

16-18 19-25 26-35 36-50 51-65 65+

2.) Have you volunteered with any community service organization within the last 5 years?

Yes No

If YES, please proceed to question 3. If NO, please proceed to question 8.

3.) With what organization have you volunteered?

4.) For how long and how regularly did you volunteer?

5.) What motivated you to volunteer at that time? (Check all that apply, if other please explain)

Religious Organization Service Learning/School Friend/Family
 Corporate Event Resume Benefits Mandated Hours Free
Time

Other _____

6.) Did you acquire any skills through the volunteer work? (Please list skills below)

7.) Was there any incentive or circumstance that encouraged you to volunteer? (Check all that apply, if other please explain)

Discounts Gifts Recognition

Other _____

8.) Would you consider volunteering in the future?

Yes No

9.) What time and day(s) of the week are you most available for volunteering? (Check all that apply)

Mornings: Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday

Thursday Friday Saturday

Afternoons: Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday

Thursday Friday Saturday

10.) At what times of the year are you most available for volunteering? (Rank 1-5, 1 being most available)

Fall Winter Spring Summer

January February March April May June

July August September October November December

11.) If you have not volunteered, is there any particular reason why?

12.) What comes to mind when you think of volunteering? (Check all that apply)

Enjoyable Tedious Time Consuming Enriching

Meaningful Tiring Networking Social

Requirement Scholarship Intimidating Service

Skills

Thank you very much for your participation!

APPENDIX C: RESTORE VOLUNTEER QUESTIONNAIRE

ReStore Volunteer Questionnaire

We are a group of students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute working with Habitat for Humanity ReStore. We are conducting this survey to learn about why people of different ages volunteer, and when they are available to do so. We plan to use the information to help ReStore increase its pool of regular volunteers thereby increasing its benefit to the community. Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary and you may skip any question you do not wish to answer. All your answers will remain anonymous.

1.) Are you between the ages of:

16-18 19-25 26-35 36-50 51-65 65+

2.) How did you hear about ReStore?

3.) When did you begin volunteering for ReStore?

4.) What originally motivated you to volunteer with ReStore? (Check all that apply, if other please explain)

Religious Organization School Group Friend
 Resume Benefits Mandated Hours Family

Other _____

5.) Why do you keep volunteering for ReStore? (Please check all that apply, if other please explain)

ReStore Mission Making Friends Staff Resume Benefits
 Opportunity to learn more skills Enjoyment

Other _____

6.) How long have you volunteered at ReStore, and how regularly?

7.) At what times of the year do you volunteer most? (Rank 1-5, 1 being most available)

Fall Winter Spring Summer
 January February March April May June
 July August September October November December

8.) What is your favorite part of volunteering at ReStore?

9.) What surprised you about volunteering at ReStore?

10.) Could you recommend anything to change about ReStore that would enhance your volunteering experience?

11.) Would you encourage a friend to volunteer at ReStore?

Yes No

12.) If yes, Why?

13.) If no, why not?

14.) What comes to mind when you think of volunteering? (Check all that apply)

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoyable | <input type="checkbox"/> Tedious | <input type="checkbox"/> Time Consuming | <input type="checkbox"/> Enriching |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meaningful | <input type="checkbox"/> Tiring | <input type="checkbox"/> Networking | <input type="checkbox"/> Social |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Requirement | <input type="checkbox"/> Scholarship | <input type="checkbox"/> Intimidating | <input type="checkbox"/> Service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Skills | | | |

15.) If you would possibly like to be interviewed on your experience feel free to leave contact information below. (Feel free to fill out as little or as many contact as you wish)

Name: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Thank you very much for your participation!

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW MINUTES

Werner Thissen Director of Retail Operations Leominster ReStore

- The challenge with volunteers is that they are unpaid.
- There is competition with other nonprofits for volunteers.
- Need a base of volunteers for success.
- Mr. Thissen asks what volunteers want to do here before they start volunteering.
- Mr. Thissen makes a point to connect with the mission through signage out front.
- Leominster ReStore gives out a credit card of ReStore bucks for regular volunteers. ReStore bucks is 50cents an hour.
- Leominster ReStore does not advertise recruiting volunteers, only advertises donations and sales.
- PowerPoint is the wrong medium. Videos are a better way too communicate to potential volunteers.
- Leominster ReStore has a project list for volunteers to come in and check.
- All volunteers at the ReStore wear a ReStore vest.

Mike Foley Campus Minister St. John's Shrewsbury High School

- Students go on weekly service trips to various sites including Nativity School in Worcester.
- Students go on service trips to places such as Haiti and Ecuador.
- There is no graduating requirement for service because students just grow into service.
- Senior leaders network service opportunities to underclassmen and fellow classmates.
- Students volunteer for a better college application too, but mostly because they genuinely care.
- St. John Shrewsbury does SJLI (Saint John's Leadership Institute) to promote service and leadership.
- Let students know why their service matters.

Steve Scott Faculty Advisor Worcester Academy

- Worcester Academy has done six build trips with Habitat for Humanity.
- The Worcester Academy Habitat for Humanity Club has great leadership.
- HFH Club members vote officers every year. It is a competitive process.
- The four pillars of their club are building, fundraising, advocacy, and education.
- Wants to establish a relationship with his local affiliate.
- 30 kids in the HFH Club and 15 consistent students who attend meetings.
- Educating students about Habitat for Humanity's message is important
- Mr. Scott wants each officer to take a day and volunteer at the ReStore.

- Jimmy Fund Club and the Habitat for Humanity Club are cornerstones of Worcester Academy volunteering.
- Students struggle to find time to volunteer because they have tight schedules.

Service Leaders Focus Group St. John's Shrewsbury High School

- Students volunteer for new experiences, college applications, a good feeling, and to help people less fortunate.
- Examples of service include XBSS retreat, everyday at the homeless shelter, and helping an elderly woman at her house.
- Students are wealthy at St. John's and want to see the other side of the spectrum.
- Even though they live in a different town than someone else, they all live in the same community.
- Students volunteer more during the school year because there is more opportunity.
- Campus ministers set up a lot of the volunteering opportunities.
- Once you get your foot in the door volunteering, it is a lot easier to do it again.
- Students recommended promoting ReStore more to get the name out there.