LNS PD Fund Narrative
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I had the wonderful opportunity to attend the recent national volunteer management conference, “Beyond the Waves”, held in Halifax NS this year. This opportunity went above and beyond my expectations in terms of meeting my practical needs for program development and support and in terms of boosting my own energy for the work I do in supporting our volunteers at the Dartmouth Learning Network. Often, as Volunteer Program Managers/Coordinators we can get caught up in the day to day of program delivery and carving out time for intentional program development can be difficult, but this is so important to be able to provide excellent service to our Clients/Learners and meet the needs of our Volunteers.

Attending this conference not only re-invigorated me for my job of managing our volunteer program and working with our wonderful volunteers, but it allowed me to continue to build a network of support to address issues that may come up and access to people and places to go for more information around volunteer management. I would highly recommend attending this conference in the future, whether you are a well-seasoned expert or someone that is just starting out in the field of Volunteer Management.

The following is a brief summary of some of the key points that I took from the workshops I attended, and I am more than willing to connect with anyone looking for more information about these sessions.

Thank you to Literacy Nova Scotia PD Fund for allowing me to access this support, without which, I probably would not have been able to attend this conference.
Keynote
Surf’s UP: Ride the Heavies and Unleash your Volunteer Management Professional
Gerard Murphy

Gerard presented ideas and stories to assist with ‘dealing with the heavy waves’ that crash upon volunteer-driven programs and the Managers that run them.

- Heavy Wave = powerful; challenging; creates change – we can’t stop the waves from coming but we can learn to surf!
- Part of the issues with volunteer-driven programs (especially in the past, but may still be true in organizations today) is a lack of vision around the roles that volunteers fulfill – we need to be clear about the use of volunteers – i.e. they are not about being used when an organization is short-staffed!

- Gerard shared his 4 Lessons for thinking/acting “Beyond the Heavy Waves”
  1. **Be The Spark** – tips:
     a. Pave your own path – don’t let others choose for you
     b. Stop settling – speak up
     c. Shake things up – push yourself out of your comfort zone
     d. Remember your DREAM (the Spark – see no. 1)
     e. Let it go! (Separate what is in your control vs. what is not)
     f. Kick off your Shoes – find your joy
  2. **Be Remarkable** – volunteer Managers are worthy of attention too!
     Volunteers create impact – so do volunteer coordinators!
  3. **Be Present for People** – do this purposefully;
  4. **Be plugged in** to Changes of Technology – but know the difference between *Distracted, Overwhelmed and Impatient* – we should be trying to align our training and engagement with what our volunteers want/need
  5. **Be Persistent** – prove naysayers/doubters wrong

- There was an activity that had us get up out of our seats and connect with others in the room and share how we were remarkable. One of the people I connected with was Bobby and when we got talking, I was explaining how difficult I found it to say why I am remarkable at my job – he likened us to photographers, people behind the scenes and framing others in beautiful ways and not comfortable with putting ourselves in front of the camera – this resonated with me, thanks Bobby!
**Name of Workshop:** Help! I’ve Been Asked to Develop a Framework for Volunteer Engagement!

**Presented by:** Sarah Indewey, CVA; Maryanne Wainman, CVA

**Session Synopsis:** Join staff from Queen’s University to hear about their introduction of a strategic volunteer engagement framework at the university. They will share their journey of implementing a *Vision for Volunteering at Queen’s*, while leveraging the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement (CCVI) as a tool for success, professionalizing processes and tools that support volunteer involvement, and raising awareness of the value of volunteer contributions within an organization.

Some of the tips and things that were shared were:

- Be clear about your organization’s **Goal State for Volunteers**
  - Think about your mission-based elements and your policy and procedures around the engagement of volunteers

- Identify the **strengths and gaps** of your volunteer engagement and then create a plan to address the challenges/gaps – elements such as:
  - Risk management and Quality Assurance
  - Best practices – there are lots of resources through Volunteer Canada
  - Record management/technology

- Gaps can be one of **three types**
  - Process
  - Technology
  - People (or content)
**Name of Workshop:** Mapping Professional Competencies - Documenting the Link between Daily Professional Practice and National Occupational Standards

**Presented by:** Brenda Wallace-Allen

**Session Synopsis:** In this workshop, participants will examine simple competency assessment tools that align with the National Occupational Standards for volunteer management professionals. These tools can be used to develop job seeking material, prepare for performance appraisals, plan professional development strategies, and assess and recognize prior learning.

This workshop looked at the NOS Standards and the process of competency assessment with respect to the field of Volunteer Management.

This was a particularly good workshop for thinking about job analysis, performance reviews, goal setting and professional development planning for Volunteer Managers – and would also come in handy for presenting a case for increasing or justifying resources for volunteer management.

- **National Occupational Standards (NOS) 2012** used for job analysis
- **Why have NOS Standards??**
  - To describe the standards of performance expected to achieve in our work
  - To know whether we have the knowledge, skills and values required to perform efficiently/effectively within this role
  - To provide benchmarks for qualifications and what are the components of the role
- **NOS Standards Benefit**
  - Current Volunteer Managers
  - Those aspiring to be Volunteer Managers
  - BODs, supervisors
  - Clients being served
  - Volunteers
  - Programs
  - General Public
- **Difference between competence (ability to do something) and qualified (having credentials and not the experience, knowledge, skills, and values required to be effective)**
  - Who might be competent and not qualified – thinking of the gap between credentials and performance
  - Competency Assessment is one process
Name of Workshop: Sticky Situations: Applying Ethics to Your Work with Volunteers

Presented by: Katie Campbell

Session Synopsis: We all encounter challenging situations with no clear “right” solution. Learn how to recognize ethical issues, understand the difference between personal and professional ethics, and the ethical principles for our field. Practice a decision-making process for navigating real-life ethical dilemmas and get tips on how to incorporate ethics into the fabric of your organization.

Ethics = more than a written “code”; guide for navigating confusion and conflict; management tool and indicator for effective leadership; influenced by history, culture, faith, experience

Related terms (but not synonymous) – moral; beliefs; values; principles; policies; standards; code of ethics

Types of Ethics: Personal; Professional; Organizational – and the less these overlap – the stickier the situation gets

Historical Context

- Statement of Professional Ethics first developed by Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA) in the 1970s and was resources for ethics and foundation for the VMP framework of ethics – international scope
- Professional ethics is a core competency of the Certification in Volunteer Management (CVA)
- VMPC first developed Dimensions for Ethical Conduct in 1990s – Canadian scope
Other Points

- What policy dictates is “right”, may not always feel right in a given situation → there is something unique/unusual about the situation
- As human beings – we have a common set of core values (source from *Josephson Institute of Ethics*)
  - Citizenship
  - Accountability Respect
  - Fairness
  - Trustworthiness
- CVA Core Values and Principles
  - Citizenship & Philanthropy
  - Respect
  - Responsibility
  - Compassion & Generosity
  - Justice & Fairness
  - Trustworthiness
- Ethical Decision Making steps...

Testing your Decision Steps

- Identify facts
- Determine the ethical Issue - which core values are in conflict
- Explore options
- Make decision & test it

Consequence Legal Image Culture Knot
Name of Workshop: Adventures in Online Volunteer Training 2.0…the Continuing Story
Presented by: Lindsay Baker
Session Synopsis: Learn about the Vancouver Aquarium’s journey to design, deliver and incorporate online modules into their volunteer training program last year. Gain insight into what worked and what didn’t, hear tips on how to get started, ask questions and explore the features of Articulate Storyline through demonstrations of their completed modules.

- This workshop was of particular interest to me as DLN has purchased the software Articulate Storyline to design our Elearning content for use on our website Moving On Up (www.dlnmovingonup.ca)
- This walked through the process for their development, implementation and their results of online training and orientation of volunteers and demo’d a couple of their modules

Respectfully submitted by:
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