



National Volunteer Week-“Celebrating People in Action”

As a volunteer it is nice to hear a thank you, but more important it is when I see or hear that participates had fun in an activity that I created, organized or assisted with. This to me is the greatest form of appreciation that one can receive and I can imagine that all you ADs may feel the same way.

I have the privilege of meeting some outstanding volunteers in different facilities that I have volunteered in since 2007. These volunteers are not the usual individuals wanting to earn class credits or family members of residents in the facility, even though all these types of volunteers are wonderful, but it is the volunteer that is a resident at the facility that are deserving of our thanks. These faithful volunteers are the residents that love to help the AD and staff with anything they possible can. They are dedicated, honest, loving and caring individuals that deserve the same amount of recognition as the regular volunteers that serve your facility. Please give them special honors during this celebration.

Suggestion:

#1: Writing activity for residents – Notes of appreciation

Ask residents to write a note of appreciation for the volunteers that come to serve at your facility. For residents that have difficulty writing but want to participate ask a staff member to write the note for them, however do not ask a volunteer since this is meant for them. These notes can be presented during your main event for all volunteers.

#2: Recruiting

I realize this time is set aside to honor those volunteers that serve in your facility; however you can also make this a time to recruit new volunteers. When hosting your luncheon or dinner for volunteers encourage them to invite a guest or two to the celebration in their honor. During the festivities award the volunteers with special notes of thanks from the residents and you could read the one that is the most heart touching out loud (with permission from the resident who wrote). This will be the greatest reward for the volunteers and will allow their guest to see why their friend or family member volunteers their time. This may open their heart to the possibility of volunteering themselves. Afterwards talk about opportunities for new volunteers in specific areas or just mention general list of things that volunteers can assist with such as reading to residents, assisting with crafts, helping with decoration, entertaining and remember you can always use some help with night activities, weekends or holidays. Make sure to have sign up sheets and activity calendars available for those guests who show an interest. Remember to recruit from within your facility as well. The higher level residents can volunteer in most areas an outside volunteer can if you give them the opportunity.

#2: Outing activity for residents to have an opportunity to be a volunteer

Spring is here and now is the time to get the residents out to do their part in the community. Check with local parks, summer schools, day care programs or the library to see if there is an area that your residents can volunteer in. Ask all capable residents if they would like to go as a group to volunteer and then decide as a group which area they can help with. Get all your paper work ready and on the appointed day take them out to do their community service by volunteering. This activity will give the residents a feeling of worth and a sense of pride. This will also be a great marketing opportunity for your facility because your residents care enough to give their time and talent back to the community as volunteers.

#3: Game for residents – Unscramble the word

Below is a list of places or times that good volunteer are needed the most. Either write them on the white board or type them up as hand outs for residents to work on at their leisure.

- ohscols (schools)
- oshptsila (hospitals)
- rkpas (parks)
- gniampac snoitcele (campaign elections)
- ayd raec tsre nec (day care centers)
- dilayohs (holidays)
- aslem no elsehw (Meals on Wheels)
- isesrrfdnua (fundraisers)
- aryrbil (library)
- uesmsum (museums)
- mlaian tlehsers (animal shelters)
- iwdl feil tcunaarsy (Wild life sanctuary)
- erd rsosc (Red Cross)
- tatibah rof ytinamuh (Habitat for Humanity)

Blessings,

Christine Jennings

Concord, NC