



Michigan Voices for Volunteerism Online – May & June 2010

In April and May of 2010, the Michigan Community Service Commission (MCSC) hosted a 10-city listening tour, “Michigan’s Voices for Volunteerism.” The listening tour provided an opportunity for community stakeholders to share their thoughts on how to expand service and volunteerism to help address our state’s biggest challenges such as: hunger, unemployment, illiteracy, high school dropouts, and the environment.

Tour stops included:

- Benton Harbor
- Cadillac
- Detroit
- Flint
- Grand Rapids
- Online*
- Houghton
- Lansing
- Muskegon
- Saginaw
- Sault Ste. Marie

**More than 70 people participated in the listening tour by responding to an on-line survey.*

People who attended the 10-city listening tour represented the following groups: K-12 schools; aging networks; colleges/universities; faith-based organizations; nonprofit agencies; public safety; community based organizations; community leaders; businesses; healthcare; elected officials; concerned citizens; foundations; corporations; service organizations; state government and; media.

Online, 72 people lent their diverse voices and thoughts to discussions that centered around community challenges and how volunteerism and national service programs can be expanded and utilized more effectively to improve the quality of life for citizens in these and other communities throughout Michigan.

Listening tour participants were asked a series of questions related to communities, volunteerism, resources, capacity, national service, and impact. The themes that emerged from online participation are listed below.

Note: Many bullets below may be accompanied by a number in parentheses. This indicates multiple individuals/groups responded with the same/similar thoughts.

1. Challenges

What are the critical challenges or issues faced in your community? Please list.

- Nonprofit Capacity/Staff/Strategic Planning (11)
- Education (8)
- Mentoring (8)
- Environment/Clean-Ups (6)
- Poverty (5)
- Affordable Housing/Homelessness (4)
- Funding (2)
- Hunger (2)
- Retaining Volunteers (2)
- Senior Services (2)
- Engagement to Local Cultures (1)
- Foreclosure (1)
- Gangs (1)
- Health Services/Awareness (1)
- Violence (1)

2. Successes

How are volunteers currently addressing critical challenges in your community?

- Education/Tutoring (6)
- Mentoring (4)
- Environmental/Neighborhood Clean Ups (3)
- Hunger (3)
- Service to Multiple Organizations (3)
- Developing their Own Service Projects (2)
- Health Care Initiatives (2)
- Leadership on Boards (2)
- Advocating (1)
- Dedicated Service by Retirees (1)
- Ending Homelessness (1)
- Fundraising (1)
- One Event at a Time (1)
- Neighborhood Watches (1)
- Urban Gardening (1)
- Volunteer Center (1)
- Working with Youth (1)

3. Resources

What resources are not being tapped to support volunteering in your community?

- Engaging Retirees/Seniors (6)
- Corporate Support (4)
- Utilizing Unemployed (2)
- Volunteer Advertising/Outreach (2)
- Collaboration (1)
- Colleges/Universities (1)
- Coordination (1)
- Engaging Youth (1)
- Faith-Based Community (1)
- Recruitment (1)
- Schools (1)
- Social Media (1)
- Volunteer Clearinghouse (1)

4. Capacity

How do we increase the capacity of organizations to engage more volunteers and do it effectively?

- Volunteer Training (4)
- Skill-Based Volunteering (3)
- Resource-Sharing (2)
- Volunteer Listserv/Database (2)
- Work Towards Common Goal (2)
- Marketing (1)
- National Service (1)
- Social Media (1)
- Volunteer Coordinators (1)
- Volunteer Position Descriptions (1)

5. National Service

How can National Service be used to enhance volunteer efforts and impacts?

- Recruit/Manage Volunteers (3)
- Education (1)
- Organize Volunteer Efforts towards Mission (1)

This question was not answered by the majority of respondents. Many that did answer responded on the challenges of National Service in their community, not how it can be used to enhance volunteer efforts and impacts.

6. Impact

How do we as a community maximize the impact of volunteerism?

- Distribute Information – Volunteer Impact/Benefits (6)
- Joint Recruitment/Collaboration (4)
- Advertise (2)
- Skill-Based Volunteering (2)
- Volunteer Training (2)
- Attack Small List of Issues/Challenges (1)
- Central Volunteer Registry/Software (1)
- Volunteer Recognition (1)

Where Online Survey respondents are from:

- Grand Rapids (12)
- Detroit (6)
- Lansing (4)
- Bay City (3)
- Flint (3)
- Southfield (3)
- Auburn Hills (2)
- Benton Harbor (2)
- Charlotte (2)
- Dearborn (2)
- Muskegon (2)
- Traverse City (2)
- Albion (1)
- Hastings (1)
- Jenison (1)
- Kentwood (1)
- Livonia (1)
- Mt. Pleasant (1)
- Newberry (1)
- Northville (1)
- Pontiac (1)
- Redford (1)
- Roseville (1)
- Saginaw (1)

- St. Joseph (1)