

2013

Diversity and motivations among volunteers in nonprofit youth development programs

Emily Thielmann

University of Southern Maine

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.usm.maine.edu/muskie_capstones

 Part of the [Civic and Community Engagement Commons](#), [Social Psychology Commons](#), [Social Psychology and Interaction Commons](#), and the [Social Welfare Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Thielmann, Emily, "Diversity and motivations among volunteers in nonprofit youth development programs" (2013). *Muskie School Capstones*. 61.

http://digitalcommons.usm.maine.edu/muskie_capstones/61

This Capstone is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Scholarship at USM Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Muskie School Capstones by an authorized administrator of USM Digital Commons. For more information, please contact jessica.c.hovey@maine.edu.

DIVERSITY AND MOTIVATIONS AMONG VOLUNTEERS IN NONPROFIT
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

BY

EMILY THIELMANN

CAPSTONE PROJECT

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Masters in Public Policy and Management in the Muskie School of Public Service
University of Southern Maine
Capstone advisor, Dr. Bruce Clary
2013

Dedicated to the volunteers and youth who have inspired me.

ABSTRACT

Portland, Maine, has a variety of programs that connect volunteers with youth based on particular risk factors. While there are many criteria that affect the outcomes programs yield for youth, the quality and reach of many of these small nonprofit programs is dependent on their volunteer capacity. The goals of this descriptive research project were to identify: nonprofit youth development program volunteer characteristics compared with local populations and volunteers nationally; motivations or benefits such volunteers associate with volunteering; and factors associated with volunteers' overall satisfaction and longevity. A questionnaire was constructed and returned by 111 active volunteers from 9 youth development programs at 5 nonprofits. A supplemental focus group was also conducted with 5 volunteers from 4 organizations. While respondents varied, majorities of volunteers tended to be white, middle to high income, and college educated, and the volunteer group characteristics differed in significant ways from those of Portland residents, Portland youth, or even volunteers nationally. Utilizing instruments and an approach developed by Clary and Snyder (1999), it was found that volunteers on average were most motivated by desires to express their values, to learn, and to grow and develop psychologically. In all, 93.1% of volunteers were satisfied or very satisfied with their volunteer experiences. Motivational themes that dominated open-ended responses included giving back, developing mentoring relationships, making a difference for youth, and having fun. The third research question, on factors associated with satisfaction and longevity, will be analyzed in a more final version of this paper. Results are discussed in the context of possible implications for nonprofit youth development agencies and practices of volunteer management.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	7
Trends in Volunteerism	7
Volunteerism in America and Maine	7
Predictors of volunteering	9
Motivations for Volunteering	11
A functional approach to volunteer motivations	12
Benefits of Volunteering	14
Volunteering with Youth	15
A popular service activity	15
Community volunteers to mitigate youth risk factors	16
2. RESEARCH DESIGN	23
Problem Statement	23
Research Questions	24
3. METHODS	26
Survey Instrument	26
Ethics and Distribution	28
4. RESULTS	30
Characteristics of Volunteers	31
Program type	31
Nature and extent of volunteer commitment	33
Demographics of survey respondents	34
Sex	35

Age	36
Race and immigration status	36
Religion	38
Education	39
Family life	39
Employment status	39
Satisfaction of volunteers	40
Future intentions	40
Satisfaction	42
Summary of volunteer characteristics	42
Motivations and Benefits of Volunteering	45
Comparison of volunteer motivation and outcome scores	45
Main reason for volunteering	47
Values function	48
Contributing or giving back	48
Making a difference	49
Social function	49
Understanding function	49
Task-specific	49
English Language Learners or diverse populations	50
Experience or learning	50
Themes beyond Clary and Snyder's functional categories	50
Mentoring or a relationship	50

Required	52
Enjoyment	52
Free time	52
Perceived similarities between volunteers and youth	53
Summary of motivations and benefits of volunteering	54
Factors Associated with Satisfaction and Duration of Experience	55
(Section to Be Completed in More Final Version of This Paper)	
5. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION	56
REFERENCES	61
APPENDIX	66

“Studying the processes of volunteerism...can provide clues to the motivations that factor into people’s decisions to volunteer, their preferences for certain volunteer tasks, their satisfaction with their experiences, their effectiveness, and ultimately their continuing involvement as volunteers. Organizations that utilize volunteers can then build upon these findings in creating programs and policies targeting volunteer retention.”

Snyder and Omoto, 2008, p. 23

1. INTRODUCTION

Trends in Volunteerism

Volunteerism in America and Maine. Sixty-four and a half million Americans – or more than a quarter of the population – volunteered their time in 2012 (Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), 2013b, p. 1). Volunteering is defined by dictionary.com as “the policy or practice of volunteering one’s time or talents for charitable, educational, or other worthwhile activities, especially in one’s community.” For measurement purposes, volunteering is typically defined as time donated through a formal organization. Volunteering will be discussed through that lens through the rest of this paper, although it is important to point out that people are driven to many kinds of charitable behaviors and activities for non-monetary reasons. While around one in four Americans volunteered “formally” in the last year, two out of three said they did favors for their neighbors (Corporation for National & Community Service (CFNS), 2012).

As of 2010, those who volunteered spent a median of 50 hours annually on their volunteer activities (BLS, 2013b, p. 3). Americans have been increasing their commitment to volunteering and civic engagement and “stepped up to support recovery and relief efforts after Hurricane Sandy” in 2012 (CFNS, 2012). In the state of Maine – as in New England at large – there is a strong tradition of volunteerism. In 2011, 32.8 percent of Maine residents volunteered, ranking Maine twelfth among the states and the District of Columbia (CFNS, 2013). The average Maine resident volunteered over 37 hours in a year (CFNS, 2013).

The questions of who is volunteering and why must be placed in the context of demographic changes occurring in both Maine and the United States as whole. As the

Baby Boomer generation ages, volunteering is rising among older persons nationwide. Volunteers 65 years of age and over comprised 24.6 percent of all volunteers in 2008 compared to 14.3 percent in 1974 (Tang, F., Copeland, V. C., & Wexler, S., 2012, p. 89). This trend may have big implications in Maine, where the population has the oldest median age in the nation. Indeed, a 2010 report by the Maine Commission for Community Service (MCCS) reported that Maine's Baby Boomers had increased the hours they devoted to volunteering by 8 percent in 2009 (p. 14). Some studies have shown that older volunteers are most likely to receive the greatest benefits from volunteering (CFNS, 2007).

Volunteering among young adults is also increasing nationwide, due in no small part to the rise in service learning and the increasing importance of early career development (MCCS, 2010). Volunteer and community service have come to be seen as part of a "continuum of work experiences from the teen years onward [that] build job-readiness skills, knowledge and confidence" (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2012, p. 8).

In the post recession years, interest in volunteering to gain work experience is rising for more than just younger populations. Volunteering in the U.S. rose among unemployed citizens in 2009, with 1.3 million unemployed persons deciding to volunteer (MCCS, 2010, p. 9). Among employed Americans, eighty-six percent expressed the view that volunteering can have a positive impact on their careers (MCCS, 2010, p. 15).

Maine – like the country at large – is also growing more ethnically diverse all the time. Although Maine is 95 percent white, the number of nonwhites in the state has tripled in the last twenty years (Muskie School of Public Service, 2012, p. 6). Little

information seems to be available about the degree of volunteering and civic engagement among different racial and ethnic groups in Maine.

Predictors of volunteering. Research has generally suggested a variety of predictors for volunteering, including that men are less likely to volunteer than women, whites are more likely to volunteer than other ethnic groups, and citizens are more likely to volunteer than foreign-born or noncitizens (Wilson, 2012). In the year ending September 2012, women volunteered more than men (29.5 versus 23.2 percent) and whites volunteered at a higher rate (27.8 percent) than blacks (21.1 percent), Asians (19.6 percent), and Hispanics (15.2 percent) (BLS, 2013b, p. 1). Formal regular volunteering tends to be lower among groups at risk of social exclusion – those in black and minority ethnic groups, with a disability or limiting, long-term illness, or with no formal qualifications (Teasdale, 2008).

Higher levels of family income and education are associated with higher levels of civic participation (Foster-Bey, J., 2008). In the year before September 2012, 42.2 percent of college graduates volunteered among those adults 25 and over, compared to only 17.3 percent of high school graduates and a mere 8.8 percent of those without high school diplomas (BLS, 2013b, p. 1). Employed persons were more likely to volunteer than those who were unemployed or out of the labor force, but part-time workers were more likely than full-time workers to volunteer (BLS, 2013b). Despite the associations that exist between race, income, and education, whites have higher levels of civic engagement than blacks, Hispanics, or Asians, even after controlling for family income and educational attainment (Foster-Bey, J., 2008). Possible reasons for group differences in civic engagement may include

“supply side factors such as different preferences for civic participation among groups, differential access to the resources needed to participate civically, such as time, or lack of information about the opportunities to be civically engaged. Group variations in volunteering and services may also be the results of demand side factors such as fewer available opportunities to serve, or the failure by non-profits to ask certain groups to serve or volunteer” (Foster-Bey, 2008, p. 9).

Volunteering – at least in the formal sense by which is often measured and defined – is a cultural value that can vary across cultural norms of different socioeconomic, ethnic, or national groups. Among immigrants, acculturation may only partially explain likelihood of formal volunteering, as it has different effects among different ethnic groups (Sundeen, R. A., Garcia, C., & Raskoff, S. A., 2008). A Canadian study of ethnic religious congregations found that 84.8% of immigrants volunteered, mostly through their congregations, which had cultivated cultures of volunteering (Handy, F., & Greenspan, Itay, 2008, p. 963). These results suggested that typical barriers to volunteering like lack of information or language challenges may not affect immigrants given the right circumstances. While 42.1 percent of volunteers surveyed in 2012 approached their organizations on their own, almost as many (41.6 percent) became involved after being asked to volunteer, typically by someone within the organization (BLS, 2013b, p. 4). This suggests that perhaps those with more connections within organized institutions are more likely to volunteer.

Additional social factors are associated with volunteering. In 2012, married persons volunteered more than those who had never married (BLSb, 2013). Nesbit (2012) also found that major life cycle events affect volunteering and hours volunteered. The influence of major life events depends in part on the characteristics of those they affect. Divorce is unrelated to volunteering, except divorced men are more likely to volunteer and increase their hours, and divorcees with children in the home are more

likely to volunteer (Nesbit, 2012). Widowhood decreases likelihood of volunteering, except among older volunteers (Nesbit, 2012).

In the short term, having a child negatively impacts volunteering for everyone (Nesbit, 2012). However, children in general tend to be tied with volunteering. In the year leading up to September 2012, parents with children under 18 were almost ten percentage points more likely to volunteer than non-parents (33.5 to 23.8 percent) (BLS, 2013b, p. 1). Perhaps related to this, the thirty-five to forty-four year-old age bracket is the most likely to volunteer (BLSb, 2013). Dávila and Diaz-Morales (2009) found that motivations for volunteering change for different age groups. Certain motivations decrease over time, like a desire to gain career experience, while others increase, such as the desire to express one's values through volunteering.

Motivations for Volunteering

Snyder and Omoto (e.g. Snyder and Omoto, 2008; Snyder and Omoto, 2009) use a conceptual construct called the Volunteer Process Model to guide their research about volunteering. The model classifies the different stages of the volunteer process according to antecedents, experiences, and consequences of volunteering (Snyder and Omoto, 2008). The stages of the Volunteer Process Model are not isolated but deeply interdependent. This interdependence has significant implications for understanding volunteer motivations as they interact with the volunteer's environment and experience. For example, research has suggested that volunteers are more satisfied and volunteer for a longer duration if their experiences while volunteering match their motivations for volunteering (Clary, et. al, 1998; Davis, Hall, & Meyer, 2003; Snyder and Omoto, 2008; Snyder and Omoto, 2009; Wilson, 2012). Satisfaction might also be related to some

antecedents like higher self-esteem and empowerment, as well as to experiential factors like professional supervision while volunteering (Kulik, 2007). Intention to keep volunteering is also predicted by other experience factors such as formation of good relationships with others in the organization, organizational support, performing gratifying tasks, and receiving training (Hidalgo & Moreno, 2009). Appealing to volunteers' psychological motivations also has implications for recruitment of volunteers, who are more likely to be moved by messages that tap into their particular motivations (Clary et al., 1998; Snyder & Omoto, 2009).

Davis, Hall, & Meyer (2003) developed a more elaborate version of the Volunteer Process Model to examine volunteers' experiences. They found that volunteers experienced feelings of sympathy based on their own antecedent characteristics such as altruistic motivations for volunteering, while experiences of distress were tied not to volunteers' characteristics but to the nature of the work itself. Specifically, emotionally evocative work was associated with greater distress, and distress was tied to lower level of satisfaction with volunteer experience. Organizations that attend to the motivations of their volunteers may be able to channel them to assignments accordingly, thus improving their effectiveness, satisfaction, and length of service (Snyder and Omoto, 2008).

A functional approach to volunteer motivations. Clary and Snyder (Clary & Snyder, 1999; Clary et. al, 1998) led the charge toward developing a functional approach to understanding volunteer motivations. Functional theory recognizes that people can perform the same activities for different reasons, and that people's actions are embedded in personal and social processes (Clary & Snyder, 1999). Clary and Snyder (1999) applied the lens of functional theory to suggest that initiating and continuing to volunteer

depends on the interaction between the particular motivations the volunteer has and their actual experiences.

Clary and Snyder (1999) posit that there are six primary functions served by volunteering. With the **Values** function, a person volunteers to express his or her values. The **Understanding** function describes the act of volunteering to learn more about something or to exercise skills rarely put to use. The **Enhancement** function pertains to volunteering to develop psychologically, including developing enhanced feelings of self worth. The **Career** function refers to volunteers who seek to gain career-related experience through volunteering. The **Social** function applies when volunteering enhances a persons social relationships. This includes either affording opportunities to “be with one’s friends or to engage in an activity viewed favorably by important others” (Clary et. al, 1998). Finally, the **Protective** function is to reduce negative feelings or resolve personal issues (Clary & Snyder, 1999).

The volunteer functions proved consistent both with prior studies and when tested in the Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI), an instrument Clary and Snyder developed to assess the six functions (Clary & Snyder, 1999). Clary and Snyder’s (1999) VFI showed a high degree of internal consistency and consistency of responses over time. They suggested that different volunteers have different mixes of goals, and the same volunteer may have many goals. Through looking at the six functional motivations, the VFI offers different combinations of altruistic and egoistic motives – that is, the desire to benefit others versus oneself (Clary & Snyder, 1999). In a longitudinal study of hospice volunteers who volunteered for at least a year, Finkelstein (2008) found that the volunteers who committed the most time at three months were most motivated by

altruistic Values, while those responsible for the most volunteer activity at twelve months were driven more by the more personal motives of Understanding and Enhancement.

The implication is that volunteers may initiate their work out of a desire to help others but become increasingly driven by the personal benefits of volunteering over time.

Benefits of Volunteering

Whether or not the incentive is conscious, the benefits to be had from volunteering can be powerful motivators. Research suggests that volunteering can provide distinct benefits to volunteers. Benefits include improved employability, fewer symptoms of depression, and enhanced feelings of self worth (Wilson, 2012). Volunteers also have been found to have lower mortality rates and greater functional ability (CNCS, 2007). An Australian study found that volunteering is related to measures of subjective well-being, including personal and neighborhood well-being, and that relation holds for different subgroups (Mellor et al., 2009).

Some research suggests great gains from volunteering for individuals in lower socioeconomic brackets or other groups that may not traditionally volunteer as frequently. It was found in one study that the more residents of poverty areas volunteered and played leadership roles in small nonprofits, the greater their leadership competence, influence in policy and neighborhood development, organizational collective efficacy, and sense of community (Ohmer, 2007). Another study of older adults found that blacks were less likely than whites to volunteer but, once involved, they were likely to give more time and gain more psychosocial and health benefits (Tang, F., Copeland, V. C., & Wexler, S., 2012). Further unlocking the potential of community volunteering could enable people across communities to improve their lives.

Volunteering with Youth

A Popular Service Activity. There are many types of activities for which people volunteer their time. This research project was intended to explore issues around volunteers who choose to spend their time with youth facing one or more risk factors. Broadly speaking, such youth development programs fall within the genre of youth service volunteering. Tutoring or teaching was among the five most popular service activities in 2012 (CFNS, 2012). Presumably, many of those tutoring or teaching activities were with youth. After religious organizations, the main organization for over a quarter of volunteers in 2012 was educational or youth service related (BLS, 2013b). This is probably in part because parents are so much more likely to volunteer and do so overwhelmingly in schools and youth service organizations (CFNS, 2012). Parents were much more likely in 2012 than non-parents to engage in volunteer activities related to children such as “coaching, refereeing, or supervising sports teams; tutoring or teaching; and mentoring youth” (BLS, 2013b, p. 4). This is especially true in Maine, which has the sixth highest rate of parent volunteering in the country (CFNS, 2012).

There is broad acceptance by researchers that outcomes are better for youth who have relationships with caring adults, or natural mentors, in their lives. However, “shifting marital patterns, overcrowded schools, and loss of community cohesiveness have drastically reduced the availability of caring adults and restricted their opportunities for informal contact with youth” (Rhodes, 2002, p. 11). This reality can be expounded for low-income youth who are less likely to have adults in their lives available for support due to divorce, incarceration, drug abuse, or the stress and logistics of multiple

jobs. While the involvement of parents in youth organizations is wholly positive, there is an important caveat when it comes to the country's most vulnerable youth.

Parents are more likely to be volunteering where there are more resources, such as schools in wealthier districts, as well as for their children's Little League teams or Girl Scout troops that often require fees, equipment, transportation, and time to participate. While adults across the board are less available, middle class parents are also more likely to have "purchased adult contact and protection for their children through investment in after-school programs, sitters, athletic clubs, music lessons, summer camps, and even psychotherapy" (Rhodes, 2002, p. 13). The predominance of volunteering with youth does not necessarily mean all American youth who could benefit from volunteers do.

Community volunteers to mitigate youth risk factors. Across the country, community programs connect volunteers with youth who may not have as much support – as mentors, tutors, companions, or role models. The focus areas of these programs may include providing academic support, accessible arts enrichment, mentoring services, and simply safe spaces to play and do homework after school. National programs like Boys and Girls Clubs and Big Brothers Big Sisters are part of "a growing legion of evidence-based mentoring, extended day, and summer programs" with local branches around the country that can help "address the poverty distractors that occur outside of the schoolhouse" (Balfanz, 2013). Beyond national programs, there are just as many – if not more – small community programs that arise based on local needs. Some programs target at-risk youth purely by locating in a disadvantaged school or neighborhood. With other programs, youth are referred or qualify based on particular risk factors. A qualifying risk factor may be residence in a low-income housing development;

immigration status; or a certain educational status, such as English Language Learner, high school drop out, or at-risk of not meeting grade-level standards on standardized tests.

Depending on the program, some youth volunteers work with groups of children, while some are assigned to the same youth for a long period of time. The term “mentor” implies a one-on-one relationship, although it can designate a variety of different kinds of roles. While some programs have academic “mentors,” the bulk of the literature about mentoring focuses on guidance and friendship that improves youth outcomes in a variety of areas. While one-on-one tutors focus on specific goals like improving test scores, the “strength of the mentor’s role may be embedded in its flexibility and ambiguity” (Jones, Doveston, and Rose, 2008, p. 43). Use of the term “mentor” in an academic context may imply broader guidance than a tutor may provide, such as assistance with planning for the future.

Mentoring seems to affect youth emotional and behavioral functioning, academic outcomes, and employability, with the strongest effects perceived in higher quality relationships and in programs that employ best practices such as ongoing training for mentors and expectations around frequency and duration of contact (DuBois, Holloway, Valentine, & Cooper, 2002). Rhodes (2002) determined that mentors can influence the development of their “protégés” in three ways after an emotional bond has formed: enhancing social skills and emotional well-being, improving cognitive skills by talking and listening, and serving as a role model and advocate (p. 35).

Mentors working with youth identified as at risk of exclusion and low academic attainment recognized in a series of interviews that youth needs could not always be met

by the more traditional roles associated with the young person's well-being, like parents or teachers (Jones, Doveston, & Rose, 2009). Mentoring programs have been shown to have the greatest potential benefits to youth who are at-risk (DuBois, Holloway, Valentine, & Cooper, 2002).

An influential Public-Private Ventures study of Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring programs by Tierney, Grossman, and Resch (1995) used random assignment to find that program participants were less likely to start using substances or hit someone and had improved school attendance, performance, and attitudes, as well as better peer and family relationships. Especially since a proliferation of such research about the positive effects mentoring can have on young people, there has been an explosion of interest in mentoring programs (DuBois, Holloway, Valentine, & Cooper, 2002). Due in part to the growing interest in mentoring as an intervention, an estimated 15 to 20 percent of youth who could use the care and support of a mentor have one (Metlife Foundation, 2009, p. 1). However, 15 million more youth who could use a mentor lack one, many from disadvantaged backgrounds or lacking in caring adults (Metlife Foundation, 2009, p. 1).

While some disadvantaged youth get the chance to be matched with volunteer mentors, a broader pool of youth is able to be served by afterschool or out-of-school-time (OST) programs. OST programs have been associated with positive impacts on many areas of youth development, both social and academic. Free afterschool programs, especially, offer a promising path for addressing the growing academic achievement gap between students from higher income and lower income families and between white students and students of color. Participation in afterschool programs may also increase

the chances of children completing high school and decrease their chances of engaging in risky behavior.

Volunteer tutors can play preventative roles for youth struggling academically, addressing student needs in real time and not after they are so far behind they cannot catch up (Balfanz, 2013). Enhanced student supports like community volunteers are critical to helping all students complete high school and be prepared for college and career (Balfanz, 2013). A meta-analysis of OST programs by Lauer, et. al (2006) found that OST programs that provide one-on-one tutoring for children in reading are particularly effective at affecting student achievement in reading. Lauer, et. al, also found that programs that focus on social, as well as academic, progress can positively impact student achievement. There is substantial evidence that using volunteers and other nonprofessionals as tutors in well-designed programs can enhance students' reading skills, as well as their self-esteem and attitudes towards school (U.S. Department of Education, 2001).

According to the Metlife Foundation (2008), afterschool programs are a good option for the children of the 40 percent of American families classified as working poor or receiving public assistance, who are less likely to indulge in paid tutors or extracurricular activities for their students (p. 9). Indeed, many of those children are among the 14 million youth K-12 who take care of themselves after school every day (p. 9). Afterschool programs offer “prime settings for the formation of close, enduring ties with caring adults” (Rhodes, 2005, p. 4) and also decrease the chances of youth being home unsupervised. Statistically, the hours between 3:00 pm and 6:00 pm are peak hours for children and youth to undertake in risk-taking behaviors, including tobacco, alcohol

and drug use, crime, and teenage sex (Maine Children’s Cabinet, Afterschool Workgroup, 2008). Youth in afterschool programs continue to learn and be constructive with their time, while forming positive relationships that may have a variety of far-reaching benefits.

The amount of available research on outcomes of youth development volunteer programs is small but growing. The New York City Mayor’s Office “School Every Day NYC” initiative has been matching volunteers as mentors to help at-risk students with their attendance; students with mentors have so far attended 11,820 more days than similar students (Balfanz, 2013, p. 26). Volunteers with the Baltimore Student Attendance Campaign who have been working with chronically absent students and their families have contributed to the halving of chronic absenteeism within Baltimore middle schools (Balfanz, 2013, p. 26).

The impact of afterschool and mentoring programs on factors like attendance and academic achievement is significant in itself, but this impact is also significant because absenteeism and academic failure render a child significantly more likely to become one of the approximately one million teens who drops out of high school each year. Youth who miss the ticket to graduation face enormous – and often avoidable – obstacles likely to haunt them all through their lives. A high school dropout faces an unemployment rate twice that of the general population, as well as lifetime earnings almost \$200,000 less than that of a high school graduate and almost a million dollars less than that of a college graduate (National Public Radio, 2011).

The decision to drop out comes for many youth only after many years of increasing disengagement from school, from learning, and from the entire education

community. Research suggests that there are distinct predictors of those youth who may drop out that emerge in middle and early high school, although signs can develop earlier and preventative measures can be taken as early as preschool. According to a report by Kennelly and Monrad (2007), one study found that 64 percent of those held back in elementary school and 63 percent of those held back in middle school did not complete high school (p. 6). Another study described in the same report found that more than half of sixth graders eventually left school if they met the following criteria: they attended school less than 80 percent of the time, were failing math or English, and received poor behavior marks (p. 1).

Outcomes for children today suggest that there remains a strong need for community interventions such as volunteer mentoring and tutoring programs. In 2011, only 32 percent of Maine fourth graders and 39 percent of Maine eighth graders scored at or above proficiency on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (Maine Children's Alliance, 2012, p. 9). These composite numbers do not reflect the major achievement gaps that exist between Maine students who are low income and those who are not. Among fourth graders who took the NAEP, there was a performance gap of 23 percent between students who do and do not qualify for free and reduced lunch (Maine Children's Alliance, 2012, p. 9). Nationally, 83 percent of fourth graders from low-income families failed to reach "proficient" on the NAEP (The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2010, p. 7). Further, these scores are predictive; those fourth graders who do not score proficient are very likely to become the next lowest income adults (The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2010).

One means of judging risks faced by young people today is looking at how older youth are faring as they enter adulthood. Nationally, an estimated 6.7 million youth age 16 to 24 – or 17 percent of this age group - are completely disconnected from school and the labor market (Belfield, Levin, & Rosen, 2012, p. 1). Of Maine youth age 18 to 24, an estimated 15 percent are not working or in school at all (Maine Children’s Alliance, 2012, p. 10). Those youth who are disconnected are most likely to come from low income families. Less than 40 percent of high school graduates under 25 in Maine were enrolled in college in 2011 (Shierholz, Sabadish, & Wething, 2012, p. 23). Among Maine’s teen high school graduates who were not enrolled in higher education, almost half were estimated to be unemployed or not in the labor force (Maine Children’s Alliance, 2012, p. 5). Among Maine youth who had not completed high school in 2010, around 80 percent were neither employed nor in the labor force (Maine Children’s Alliance, 2012, p. 5).

While it is unclear exactly what the effect of these trends will be down the road, these numbers suggest that youth in poverty still face major obstacles to success. Too many youth are entering adulthood unprepared for college, work, and life. Community volunteers are one method – for which there is growing evidence – of reconnecting youth and giving them the skills and empowerment needed to transition into happy adulthoods.

2. RESEARCH DESIGN

Problem Statement

Like the rest of the country, the city of Portland, Maine, has a variety of national and local programs that connect volunteers with youth based on particular risk factors. Portland has several mentoring programs and yet more programs that involve volunteers in providing youth in need with tutoring or academic assistance, enrichment activities, or leadership and career development programming. Some youth development programs do not use volunteers at all, especially those that offer clinical interventions requiring certification such as substance abuse counseling.

While some information can be garnered from organizational mission statements, publicity materials, and anecdotes, no central data are available about the youth who are served by Portland's nonprofit youth development programs. Data on youth enrolled in Portland Public Schools provides some idea of who may be accessing these programs. School district data suggests that 53 percent of students enrolled in Portland Public Schools qualify for free and reduced lunch, 20 percent are limited English proficiency, and 39 percent are non-white (Portland Public Schools, 2013). It is likely that the levels of low-income, limited English, and minority youth are higher at the nonprofits that intentionally target youth with risk factors.

While there are many criteria that affect the outcomes programs yield for youth, the quality and reach of many of these small nonprofit programs is dependent on their volunteer capacity. While Maine's volunteerism rate was above the national average in 2010, the percentage of Mainers who were intensive as opposed to episodic volunteers (defined as 100 hours or more per year) was below the national average (MCCS, 2010, p.

10). Making connections with youth through relationships is not like spending a Saturday picking up trash on a beach; in youth development programs that depend on relationships, intensive volunteers are the ones who make the most lasting difference. Research on mentoring has even shown that volunteer mentors who do not follow through on their long-term commitments with youth can actually cause harm to youth (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002).

Volunteers are recruited and attracted to these organizations for a variety of reasons, and length and depth of volunteer commitment vary tremendously. While there is a growing body of research about volunteer motivations, there is little information specific to the motivations that drive people to volunteer in youth programs, let alone youth development programs. In youth development programs where volunteers are such an important input of program delivery, improved understanding of the different reasons why volunteers start or continue volunteering could enhance nonprofit organizations' program effectiveness.

Research Questions

The goals of this descriptive research project were to identify who is volunteering in Portland's youth development programs and to provide information about what motivates those volunteers to start and continue volunteering. Youth development program was operationally defined as a program for which youth qualify, are referred to, or access based on particular risk factors. Examples of such risk factors include residence in a low-income housing development or a certain educational status, such as English Language Learner, high school drop out, or at-risk of not meeting grade-level standards on standardized tests.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

- What are the characteristics of those who are actively volunteering in Portland's youth development programs, and how do those characteristics compare to national statistics on volunteers, the demographics of Portland, and the characteristics of youth being served by the programs?
- What reasons do people cite for volunteering, in terms of motivations or benefits?
- What factors are associated with volunteers' overall satisfaction and duration of experience?

3. METHODS

A purposive non-probability sample of organizations was selected based on the researcher's knowledge of area organizations, consultation with the United Way of Greater Portland, and reviews of Guidestar and the Maine Association of Nonprofit Member Directory. Organizations were only considered that have programs that target and predominantly work with youth who have one or more risk factors, such as English Language Learner status. From among the possible organizations, the researcher identified five organizations and nine programs whose programming incorporates a significant amount of volunteers and who were willing to participate in the study. Based on conversations with each agency, it was estimated that there were approximately 300 total active volunteers across all of the programs. This was just an estimate based on compiled point-in-time staff knowledge and could be either high or low.

Table 1, in the Appendix, lists the participating organizations and programs. The table also lists the general focus and target population for each program. Each organization has its own methods for assessing eligibility, and detailed information about enrollment requirements was not collected for the purposes of this research. In order to demonstrate the intentional focus each program has on targeting youth risk factors, language from the organizations' mission statements or program descriptions is displayed in Table 2.

Survey Instrument

A questionnaire instrument was constructed with four sections, as well as a cover page outlining information about the study. The first section collected information about the volunteer role, relationship with the agency, intensity of commitment, level of

satisfaction, and future intentions. All of the questions were close-ended except two, which probed into the reasons why people volunteer and/or reasons if they expect to stop volunteering in the next year. The question about overall satisfaction with volunteering used a Likert-style scale to assess satisfaction.

The second section and third section employed the functional approach to volunteering (Clary, et. al, 1998; Clary & Snyder, 1999) discussed on pages 12-13. The second section used the Volunteer Functions Inventory (Clary, et. al, 1998; Clary & Snyder, 1999) to assess Reasons for Volunteering and the third used related instrument developed by Clary and Snyder to assess Volunteering Outcomes. Questions and scoring guidelines assessing Clary and Snyder's 6 volunteer functions are widely available online, including the 30 VFI and 18 additional statements assessing volunteer outcomes. The particular version used was taken from the University of Notre Dame website.¹

The second section of the survey, Reasons for Volunteering (the VFI), included 30 reasons people volunteer and a scale assessing from 1 through 7 the degree of importance and accuracy of each statement to the volunteer. The third section, Volunteering Outcomes, presented 17 outcomes that can result from volunteering and asked on a scale from 1 through 7 the amount of agreement or disagreement the volunteer felt about each statement. Clary and Snyder's outcomes tool assessment originally had 18 questions, but the last one assessing future intentions to volunteer was moved to the first section of this survey. One additional change made was that for each of the 1-

¹http://generosityresearch.nd.edu/assets/13636/clary_snyder_volunteer_function_inventory_scale.pdf

through-7 scales, a number 8 was added for “Don’t Know.” This number was later treated as a 0 for scoring purposes.

The final section of the questionnaire focused on close-ended demographic questions. Many questions were simplified versions of Census questions and assessed things like gender, age, race, income bracket. Because so many of the youth programs target immigrant youth, questions were added about whether the person was an immigrant (and if so, what the person considers his or her country of origin) and whether English was his or her first language. The researcher further wanted to explore the extent to which volunteers and youth shared life experiences or other traits, so a question was added about perceived similarities: *Do you feel you have any similarity (e.g. life experiences or characteristics) with the youth with whom you are volunteering?* There was space to elaborate on this question if desired.

Ethics and Distribution

Once the survey was constructed, the researcher worked with the volunteer manager staff at the participating nonprofit organizations in order to distribute the survey to volunteers. Since the researcher worked with each agency to distribute the survey, volunteer contact information was not necessary. Agencies were asked to forward a cover e-mail by the researcher and link to the online survey to their active youth program volunteers. The survey was developed and accessed through www.surveymonkey.com.

Volunteers were eligible to participate as subjects if they were actively volunteering in a participating youth development nonprofit program. No direct identifiers were collected in the survey, and a warning message reminded volunteers to avoid supplying identifying information in the open-ended responses. Close-ended

questions were designed to protect individuals from supplying specific enough information to identify them. For example, volunteers chose from a series of ranges for age instead of writing birthday or exact age.

The questionnaire, as well as the cover page at the beginning, were reviewed and approved by the University of Southern Maine Institutional Review Board (IRB), along with the entire outline of the study proposed. The IRB-approved cover page at the beginning of the questionnaire outlined the purpose of the research, along with the possible risks and benefits of participating. The cover page reminded volunteers that their participation was voluntary, and that they must be 18 or older to participate. By clicking “Proceed to Survey,” volunteers acknowledged having read this page and that they were participating voluntarily. A similar notice was signed by focus group participants before they were able to participate.

4. RESULTS

These results are based on responses to the study questionnaire, which included both open- and close-ended questions. The cover e-mails describing the survey were sent to all the participating agencies' youth program volunteers and follow-up e-mails were requested by the researcher and sent by almost all agencies 2 to 3 weeks later. The survey was closed approximately 1 to 2 weeks after the reminder e-mails went out. There were 111 total responses, though some of those entered the survey but did not complete most or all of it. Responses that had only clicked "Proceed to Survey" were discarded and not included in the analysis.

As a nonprobability sample, it was not necessary for the sample to achieve a 50 percent response rate so that the results would be sufficiently representative of an entire population – in this case of *all* nonprofit youth development program volunteers in the region. Instead, the objective was to reach a sufficient sample of such nonprofit youth development program volunteers to make some generalizations about such volunteers, as well as to probe into some of the types of issues and motivations that emerge among them.

The original point-in-time estimate of 300 volunteers who may have received the e-mail was approximated from the researcher's communications with each agency around their estimated numbers of active youth program volunteers. Since a lot was already being asked of participating agencies, the researcher did not request an exact count of volunteers who actually received the e-mail and survey information. Since protections were in place so participation was anonymous, the researcher never saw the exact number of e-mail addresses to which the survey and accompanying communications were sent. It

is often difficult for busy agencies to say exactly how many active volunteers they have. Even if they are able to say an exact number – a far easier task if the agency has a current management information system – the number of active volunteers does not always translate to a complete and current listing of e-mail addresses. Given these considerations, it is not clear of the extent to which 300 was a high or low estimate of overall total volunteers.

What follows is a review of results from the questionnaire and corresponding analysis. Additional commentary integrated throughout this section is based on a focus group that was held after the questionnaire was closed with 5 representative volunteers from 4 of the agencies. The results are organized around the three major research questions on page 25 and thus into a section on Characteristics of Volunteers, Motivations and Benefits of Volunteering, and Factors Associated with Satisfaction and Duration of Experience. Responses are summarized, with select results presented in tabular format in the Appendix at the end of this paper.

Characteristics of Volunteers

Program type. Table 3 shows the breakdown of types of programs in which respondents volunteered. Respondents were given a list of descriptors and asked to identify which best described the youth programs in which they were volunteering. Respondents had the option of choosing more than one descriptor. Over half of respondents (57.4 %) considered the youth development programs in which they were involved to be academic or about providing tutoring. Most (37.6% of total respondents) of the volunteers who were involved in academic/tutoring programs chose “*Tutoring/academic program- English Language Learners,*” while the other 19.8% of

respondents chose “*Tutoring/academic program – General focus.*” Almost half (48.5%) of respondents were involved in one-on-one mentoring that was mostly non-academic in focus. The 9 respondents who selected “*Other*” mostly provided more detail, though some added new information such as “*boat building,*” which one person wrote was a “*mixture of job skills and enrichment.*” Responses to this question confirm that most of these volunteers were working in programs that have some type of youth development focus. That the bulk of descriptions were academic or mentoring programs suggests that these are programs focusing on targeting risk factors and building youth skills and resiliency.

Another question asked volunteers about their roles with the agency. Once again, multiple answers were permitted. Of respondents to this question, 47.5% reported volunteering with one youth as a community-based mentor, 21.8% volunteering as site-based mentors, 26.7% volunteering with multiple youth in a group setting, and 15.8% doing some combination of those. Most volunteers considered their roles to be working with one youth, at least part of the time. While this may in part reflect the number of mentoring program volunteers involved in the study, the predominance of one-on-one volunteering is significant. When volunteers consistently work with the same youth, there is more time for a relationship to develop. Other advantages may emerge when volunteers work with multiple youth in a group setting. For example, in group settings, youth and volunteers may be exposed to a variety of personalities and learn skills like adaptability.

Volunteers were also asked what they spent most of their time doing as volunteers in their programs. Multiple answers were again permitted. Table 2 shows these

responses. Over half (51.0%) reported spending most of their time tutoring or providing homework support, half mentoring one-on-one (50.0%), 13.7% teaching, planning, or leading activities, 2.9% supervising or managing behavior, and 22.5% playing (sports, games, etc.).

Once again, these responses confirm that volunteers' uses of their time tended to be consistent with the programs' youth development related missions. Nonetheless, over one fifth of respondents reported spending most of their time playing with youth. It is important to recognize that playing can be very important to youth development as well, especially if youth are developing important relationships or observing volunteers' behavior while they play. Three respondents selected that they spend most of the time doing other activities: *"providing rides, conducting college tours, chaperoning field trips;" "boat building;"* and *"attend community events."*

Nature and extent of volunteer commitment. Most respondents (44.6%) became involved as volunteers through word of mouth. The next most common means of getting involved was being asked to volunteer directly by someone already involved with the organization, which was true for 25.3% of survey respondents, as well as for 23.8% of Americans who volunteered in 2012 (BLS, 2013b). About the same number of Americans who volunteered in 2012 approached their organizations (42.1%) as began volunteering because of being asked by someone (41.6%) (BLS, 2013b). Most who selected *"Other"* for how they became involved in the questionnaire just provided more detail or information on their motivations; however, some new ideas were expressed, including *"met my mentee outside the program and joined to support him," "Community Service Office at USM,"* and *"was in the program as a child."*

Table 5 shows volunteers' self-reported time commitment to the program. The largest group volunteered 1 to 2 hours weekly (42.4%) and second largest 2-4 hours weekly (37.4%). Almost half of respondents (46.5%) reported committing 2 or more hours a week to their program. No respondents are no longer volunteering, though 10.1% volunteer sporadically (not weekly, but once or more each month). The three volunteers who put "Other" all reported volunteering for one long block of time (up to one day) once or twice a month. The predominance of weekly contact is significant in mentoring relationships, in which "frequent, regular contact provides more opportunities to develop a close relationship by engaging in shared activities and providing ongoing social and emotional support" (MENTOR, 2009, p. 8). Regular contact in group settings also allows for familiarity and bonds to develop between youth and volunteers.

Volunteers also responded as to how long they had been volunteering with the program (Table 6). The most respondents (30.4%) had been volunteering between one and three years, and 49.0% had volunteered at least one year. Since volunteering with youth is in part about building relationships, the large portion of respondents that had been volunteering for at least one year is significant. Some agencies, like Big Brothers Big Sisters, require at least a year's commitment of their volunteers. This is likely because numerous studies have shown that longer term mentoring relationships result in more benefits for youth (MENTOR, 2009). Also, in any agency, asking a minimum commitment of volunteers helps justify the time and resources involved in screening and training each individual volunteer.

Demographics of survey respondents. The sample of nonprofit youth development program volunteers was non-probability, and thus, the characteristics of

respondents cannot be taken for an accurate representation of the breakdown of all nonprofit youth development program volunteers in Portland or in Maine. That said, there is still value to looking at how the characteristics of this large sample of nonprofit youth development program volunteers compare with national volunteer statistics and – in some cases – with the likely characteristics of youth being served by the programs. Since there is no reliable or overarching data about which youth are served by the programs, data about children in Portland Public Schools will be used as a proxy measure where comparisons are made.

Sex. Significantly more respondents identified as female (63.7%) than male (36.3%). Possible explanations for such disparities include that women – more commonly child bearers – are more likely to have flexible work schedules or time at home. For these youth program volunteers, there is an even greater gender disparity among respondents than there is nationally. Nationwide, just 57.8% of 2012 volunteers were women and 42.2% were men (BLS, 2013b).

One possible reason is that women make up the bulk of teachers and childcare providers, and this trend may transfer to unpaid positions that involve working with youth as well. In 2012, women made up 57.3% of secondary school teachers, 81.4% of elementary and middle school teachers, and a whole 94.1% of childcare providers (BLS, 2013a). Nationwide, 11.3% of women who volunteered in 2012 had tutoring or teaching as their main activity compared with only 6.9% of men (BLS, 2013b). The difference was less dramatic with mentoring, in which 5.9% of men engaged next to 6.5% of women (BLS, 2013b). Many mentoring programs conduct targeted recruitment of men or even have requirements that any mentor matches be same-sex.

Overall, approximately 345,000 more women volunteered in education or youth service organizations than men in 2012 (BLS, 2013b). In addition to sociological factors relating to gender roles in the workplace, there may also be cultural biases around recruiting male volunteers or placing them in roles working with children, especially with widespread media coverage of child molestation cases with male perpetrators.

Age. Respondents were well distributed across different age brackets. The age breakdown of volunteers is shown in Table 7. There was a slightly greater concentration in the twenties (37.4%). The second most frequent age bracket was the thirties (18.7%). As mentioned in the background, the thirty-five to forty-four year-old age bracket is the most likely to volunteer nationwide (BLSb, 2013). As of 2005, however, the 16-24 year-old age group was most likely to volunteer *as mentors* (Foster-Bey, J., Dietz, N., & Grimm, R., 2006). It may be that dominant age range for volunteers who choose to work with youth varies from the dominant age range of volunteers more generally. Age impacts factors such as ability to relate with youth, responsibility for children of one's own, and availability of energy for fast-paced youth program environments. While there were not as many volunteers who were older, numbers do pick back up in the fifties and sixties. This is significant in light of the rise in volunteering among older persons as Baby Boomers age. Since the survey was distributed online, it may have excluded some older volunteers who do not have computers or e-mail addresses or who are not comfortable filling out an online survey.

Race and immigration status. Respondents to the survey were 97.8% white. This percentage is higher than the city of Portland (85%) and Maine at large (95.2%) (United States Census Bureau, 2013). Two respondents (2.2%) moved to the United

States from another country and two (2.2%) spoke first languages other than English. This suggests that most of the volunteers do not themselves have the experience of being English Language Learners, even though 37.6% reported that they volunteer tutoring or helping with the homework of students who are English Language Learners. In the city of Portland, 14% of residents five years old and over speak a language other than English at home and 10.7% were born in another country (United States Census Bureau, 2013). Among Portland Public School students, 20% are English Language Learners (Portland Public Schools, 2013). Students in Portland Public Schools speak approximately 60 languages in their homes (Portland Public Schools, 2013).

Comparisons of volunteer demographics with those of the city of Portland are limited, because as Maine's largest city and cultural and economic center, volunteers are likely to come not just from Portland but also from surrounding areas. However, these numbers do suggest that those who are volunteering in these nonprofit youth development programs are substantially more likely to be white and native-born than either Portland residents or youth in Portland Public Schools.

There are many reasons why this may be the case, including cultural values around volunteerism in different communities, socioeconomic factors that permit for the extra time to volunteer, and confidence in abilities to tutor English or other subjects. In particular for non-native English speakers, there is also a distinct possibility of survey bias. Those with any difficulties comprehending the survey were probably least likely to complete it.

Even in programs that work with English Language Learners or immigrants, there are many reasons why members of the area's immigrant community may not be as

involved as volunteers. Volunteering, as it is formally defined, is more prevalent in some communities than others. Neighbors, family members, or members of particular ethnic communities may be deeply involved in giving back to their communities through informal networks. This could also include working with youth as mentors, tutors, or role models outside of formal organizations. In programs that intentionally provide academic support to English Language Learners or struggling students, there may be fewer individuals from immigrant communities who are confident with their English tutoring abilities and able to provide that kind of support.

There is some evidence from the study that volunteers are drawn to working with English Language Learners out of desire to interface with the local immigrant community. There was a recurring theme in the open-ended questions and the focus group of wanting to know, understand, and value the local immigrant population. “Jim” in the focus group described the New American population as a “treasure to our state” which we need to be careful not to lose. Another focus group participant, “George,” cited the saying “Think globally, act locally,” in expressing his initial impetus to get involved in a community study center that served immigrant youth. “George” also mentioned that some of his greatest difficulties came out of dealing with cultural differences, especially religious differences.

Religion. Religion of respondents varied, with over half (51.2%) expressing that they had no religious affiliation. None of the organizations included in this study were faith-based. If some had been, there may have been a greater percentage of volunteers who identified with a religion. 45.2% identified as Christian, with a pretty even split

between Protestant (23.8%) and Catholic (21.4%). Just 3.6% of respondents identified as either Muslim (1.2%) or Jewish (2.4%). Seven responded “Other.”

Education. As Table 8 shows, the overall level of education for respondents was very high. Just 1.1% of respondents had only a high school diploma or equivalent, no respondents had less than a high school diploma, and 20.0% had either some college or an Associate’s degree. 78.9% of respondents had at least a Bachelor’s Degree. This is significantly higher than the percent of persons age 25 and over with a Bachelor’s in Portland (44.2%) and in Maine overall (27.1%) (United States Census Bureau, 2013). Even nationwide, just 48.8% of volunteers 25 and over had at least a Bachelor’s degree in 2012 (BLSb, 2013). Possible reasons for the especially high education level of these youth program volunteers may include how recruitment is conducted and who feels comfortable with the tasks involved, including tutoring in a wide variety of subjects.

Family Life. 38.2% of respondents were married and 50.6% were never married. 11.2% were widowed or divorced. Just 11.2% had children in the home, though 39.3% had children. 60.7% had no children. As discussed in the background, national trends suggest that persons with children and persons who are married are most likely to volunteer (BLSb, 2013). Those trends did not carry over into the group of volunteers who responded to the survey. One possible reason may be the specific scheduling demands of the programs, which mostly seek help during evenings, weekends, and afterschool. People with children of their own at home also may be less likely to seek intensive, one-on-one relationships with youth.

Employment Status. Most respondents were employed full time (53.3%), and 21.1% were employed part time. 58.6% of respondents worked more than 35 hours per

week, while 41.4% did not work that much each week. Nationally, 65.2% of volunteers work full time (defined as 35 hours or more in a week) (BLSb, 2013). Very few (6.7%) of respondents were unemployed or not in the labor force for reasons other than being retired. A whole 18.9% were retired. As stated in the background, the national rise in volunteering among older persons may be especially relevant for Maine's relatively older population.

Table 9 shows the breakdown of reported household income among respondents. Most respondents (54.4%) had family incomes of \$50,000 or greater, higher than the median for Portland or Maine. Median household income in Portland is \$45,153, and in Maine is \$47,898 (United States Census Bureau, 2013). The trend towards very high family income may be tied to the overall high education levels found among respondents. If, as the survey suggests, nonprofit youth program volunteers are wealthier than average, that may be tied in part to the avenues through which such volunteers are recruited or in who is able to commit the requisite amount of time to be a youth program volunteer.

Satisfaction of volunteers.

Future intentions. Assessing volunteers' intentions to volunteer in the future is another way of looking at satisfaction and retention. Intention to continue is not, however, a perfect substitute for retention, because volunteers may not follow through with their expressed intentions to stay or to leave. 72.5% of respondents anticipated that they will be volunteering at the same organization one year from filling out the survey, 25.5% thought they would be volunteering at another organization, 4.9% thought they would not be volunteering at all, and 17.6% did not know. Even though these numbers are just projections, it is significant that a majority of respondents anticipated being with

the same organization the next year. Volunteers who stay longer are able to spend more time developing relationships with youth and seeing those relationships through to their full impact.

Respondents were also asked, *“If you no longer volunteer or anticipate that you will stop volunteering within the next year, describe your reasons.”* Thirty-four individuals responded to this question, although 10 wrote “N/A” or just expressed a hope to continue. Responses to this question almost entirely had to do with factors that were extraneous to the volunteer experience itself. Of the twenty-four remaining responses, 8 (33.3%) referenced that they may be or will be moving. Eleven (45.8%) responses referenced other constraints on time, such as school, work, or family. One person cited another similar volunteer commitment that would take precedence. Examples include:

“Not sure at this point of my status of possible future volunteerism?? School is my main focus right now and I am also starting a new career as I graduate in May.”

“I had told the director I couldn't do it this year due to time constraints, demands of my own family, etc. This was a special situation and while it's taken a commitment, I have no regrets.”

Other responses varied. One response said the program was ending. Two noted that the volunteer requirement was ending, and they had no plans to continue. Two respondents noted that the youth with whom they were working would age out of the program, and they would not continue. One example is below:

“The youth I am mentoring will be aging out of the program. I don't anticipate signing up to be matched with another youth as I have children of my own now, however I do anticipate that my relationship with the youth will continue even though we will no longer be officially part of the mentoring program.”

One person wrote that they would not or may not continue due to low student motivation. Interestingly, no other response referenced stopping due to difficulties with

youth or strained youth relationships. This should reflect quite positively on the programs involved. While volunteers may in fact quit as they become exasperated or overwhelmed by youth or the tasks required, there is no indication from these responses that this is a common cause of attrition. One focus group participant, “Stephen,” remarked that he stays around because he understands what the organization is trying to accomplish overall. By believing in and feeling a part of the bigger picture mission, he is able to overlook individual challenges that arise with particular youth. Other participants echoed that sentiment.

Satisfaction. To assess satisfaction, there was first one close-ended question with a Likert-style five-part scale (very satisfied, satisfied, neutral, etc...). Table 8 displays the results of this question. The vast majority of respondents (93.1) were satisfied or very satisfied with their experience volunteering with youth at this organization. This measure suggests very high overall satisfaction on the part of respondents, though it should be noted that individuals may have been more inclined to fill out the survey if they were more satisfied and engaged to being with. Part of the Volunteer Outcomes section discussed below also assessed volunteer satisfaction.

Summary of volunteer characteristics. The tasks, in which respondents reported being involved, are consistent with the missions of the agencies involved (See Table 2). Most respondents to the questionnaire were involved with youth in mentoring or tutoring capacities. Most spent at least some of their time working one-on-one with the same youth. That volunteers’ choice of principal task did not add up to 100% suggests that many volunteers have several roles at once. Even in the presence of a clear and focused job title, volunteers may be accustomed to wearing many different hats. In a

focus group conducted as part of this study, “Amanda”² recalled a time when she was so torn between finishing a building project she was working on with youth and her task of keeping the kids happy. She finally had to ask her supervisor what her priority should be, and the supervisor confirmed: “*kids happy.*”

Volunteers became involved in a variety of ways, mostly through word of mouth. Almost 90% of volunteers reported spending at least one hour a week in their programs, and almost half had been volunteering for one year or more. The large portion of volunteers who were involved consistently and over a long period of time has positive implications for the programs. There is a possibility of self-selection among respondents; that is, those who volunteer more and who are more satisfied were the most likely to complete the questionnaire. Nonetheless, frequent and experienced volunteers suggest less turnover and more likelihood of developing bonds with youth.

Overall, the demographics of survey respondents differ in significant ways from the demographics of volunteers nationally, of Portland residents, and of youth in the Portland Public School system. Volunteers were of all ages, with a majority in their twenties and thirties. The vast majority of volunteers were white and native to the United States, in spite of the numbers of minorities and immigrants in Portland and the Portland School system. Volunteers were highly educated compared to the rest of Maine and Portland. Majorities of volunteers were never married and did not have children, though there was a range of family situations. Among those who chose to answer the question about family income, the numbers were well distributed, but over half reported family incomes higher than the median for Portland or Maine.

² All names of focus group participants are pseudonyms.

The extent to which this sample is representative of all nonprofit youth development program volunteers in Portland is not entirely clear. The sample was non-representative and not intended to provide generalizable information about the entire body of youth program volunteers. Nonetheless, a response of over 100 does provide some picture into who is volunteering in area nonprofit youth development programs. These numbers could provide a good starting point for agencies that are interested in including a broader pool of individuals from the community or a body of volunteers that better reflects the characteristics of the youth in their programs.

There has been some research into the match between volunteer and youth characteristics in the context of race and mentoring. When identifying their own, natural mentors, youth tend to gravitate towards mentors of their same race or ethnicity, but studies differ as to the benefits of same- versus cross-race matches in formal mentoring programs (Liang & West, 2007). Tensions may arise for minority, lower-income, or immigrant youth who have to reconcile their white-middle class mentors' visions of success with the values in their family (Rhodes, 2002). Yet Liang and West (2007) note studies that have found race is not relevant to the success of matches that are otherwise based on shared interests, preferences, and geographic proximity. More important than differences between volunteers and the youth they mentor is variables like relationship skills, cultural sensitivity, and training that inform volunteers' ability to negotiate difference and conflict (Liang & West, 2007).

The above suggests that it may not be as important to have mentors of the same race as youth with whom they are working, but other variables may be more influential, like cultural sensitivity or even shared interests and preferences that may result from

similar backgrounds. Regardless of the outcomes in individual relationships, there are many benefits to having a body of volunteers that better represents the local population or the characteristics of the youth being served. Further research could be conducted to look into what impact – if any -- the demographic breakdown of volunteers has on youth and program outcomes, as well as whether there are other groups and individuals locally who would be interested in volunteering but are not being reached for whatever reason. This could have to do with avenues for recruitment, cultural and economic factors around volunteering, and even with particular roles volunteers are performing.

Overall, most volunteers anticipated still volunteering one year from taking the survey, and the vast majority were very satisfied. Of those who anticipated that they would stop volunteering and gave a reason, only one respondent cited a reason that had to do with challenges of youth and the program as opposed to outside influences like demands of a job.

Motivations and Benefits of Volunteering

Comparison of volunteer motivation and outcome scores. The Volunteer Functions Inventory was used in the second section of the questionnaire, Reasons for Volunteering, to ask volunteers how important or accurate each in a series of possible reasons for volunteering was for them in doing volunteer work at their organizations. The scoring method came from Clary and Snyder's original instrument. A 7-point scale was used, so that 1 was "not at all important/accurate for you" and 7 "extremely important/accurate for you." Volunteers responded to each of a series of 30 statements on the scale, and then responses were scored, with 5 variables representing each of the 6 functions: Career, Social, Values, Understanding, Enhancement, and Protection. With a

possible rank as high as 7 for each statement, the total possible VFI score for each function was 35. Individual volunteers' composite scores for each function were then divided by 5 for the 5 variables in each category, in order to get a final score for each function in the same range as the original measures.

Table 11 shows the results for the Reasons for Volunteering section of the questionnaire. The table provides respondents' mean scores for each statement, as well as means for overall scores within each of the functional categories. The overall mean scores were calculated by dividing all of the adjusted overall scores for each functional category by the total number of respondents. An overall mean score closer to 7 suggests that function was more accurate and important for respondents on average, while a lower score suggests less overall importance or accuracy for respondents on average.

The highest mean score (6.2) was for Values, suggesting that the average youth program volunteer was most motivated by a desire to express values through volunteering with youth. Such values may include feeling compassion and concern for youth and being driven by a desire to help. The second highest mean score (5.1) was for Understanding, suggesting that youth program volunteers also tended to be motivated by desires to learn, gain new perspective, and to use put skills to use that are not often used.

Enhancement received a 4.0, suggesting that growing and developing psychologically was somewhat important and accurate to the average respondent. Aspects of Enhancement include increased feelings of self-esteem and importance. Career, Social, and Protective motivations all scored closer to not important or accurate. The open-ended question about motivations shed further light on the particular motivations of respondents.

The outcomes scores were calculated in a similar way as the VFI scores. Respondents chose on a scale of 1 to 7 how much agreement or disagreement they had with 17 total statements about outcomes that can result from volunteering, with 1 being “Strongly Disagree” and 7 being “Strongly Agree.” For each respondent, outcomes were scored according to Clary and Snyder’s method, so that two statements applied to each functional category, with a total possible score of 14 for each functional area. Individuals’ scores were then divided by 2 so they would be adjusted back to the original 1-through-7 scale. The mean was then calculated for all of the respondents’ overall outcome scores for each functional category.

Table 12 displays the Volunteer Outcomes results. Once again, Values (6.0) was the strongest functional category. This score – understood through the original 1 through 7 scale – suggests that on average, volunteers agreed that experiences volunteering enabled them to express values. The two statements assessing Values outcomes were *“People I am genuinely concerned about are being helped through my volunteer work at this organization”* and *“Through volunteering here, I am doing something for a cause I believe in.”* Understanding (5.2), and Enhancement (4.6) were above average again, suggesting that respondents tended to agree that they both were learning and felt better about themselves due to volunteering.

Social scored more strongly in the outcomes section, suggesting slight agreement overall about social outcomes, which both pertain to friends and others who volunteers know finding out that they volunteered. Career and Protective functions scored relatively low overall. The Volunteer Outcomes section also included 5 variables assessing overall satisfaction. The mean of 6.2 suggests agreement to strong agreement with each of the

statements expressing satisfaction. The statements assessing satisfaction also asked about various things including enjoyment, fulfillment, and accomplishing “good.”

Main reason for volunteering. Including open-ended questions in a survey permits for a more nuanced understanding of a topic, including the emergence of new themes that may not have been reflected in the close-ended questions. Ninety-seven respondents answered the open-ended question, *“If you are currently volunteering with this organization, what is the main reason you volunteer?”* A number of themes emerged, and many statements reflected more than one theme. To remain consistent with the functional lens applied thus far, responses are organized below according to the functional motivations for volunteering developed by Clary and Snyder (1999). The themes shown in the open-ended responses do not fit perfectly into Clary and Snyder’s functional motivations, and thus some outlier themes are discussed as such. The fact that all of the surveyed volunteers were working with youth also enabled the emergence of more role-specific themes relating to things like youth, teaching, and immigrants.

Values function.

Contributing or giving back. Thirty-one (32.0%) of respondents noted desires to help others or the community in their open-ended responses. References to giving back generally implied a belief in the inherent value of helping as opposed to helping to achieve a specific outcome. Responses in this category also included references to more abstract concepts such as “civic responsibility.” Examples of actual statements include:

“Actively, and regularly, contribute something meaningful, tangible, measurable to my community.”

“I believe all people should give be engaged and involved in making their community and world a better place. Idea exchange, sharing and learning together is an investment for all of us.”

For some of those who referenced a desire to be helpful, giving back was less abstract and more explicitly about paying it forward. For example, one respondent reported having a positive experience with a mentor in one of the programs as a child.

Making a difference. Thirty-three (34.0%) responses included this theme. The theme of making a difference was examined separately from a more amorphous desire to “give back.” Responses with this theme focused not just on giving back more generally but explicitly referenced outcomes for youth or the benefits of providing youth with role models. Examples of such statements include:

“Support individuals socially, academically and emotionally. There is such a vast need for extra societal supports.”

“Today's youth often don't have the best opportunities to encourage them to be all they can be and learn all they can learn to become productive citizens as they becomes adults. Today's youth are our future. I think it's important to give them every opportunity to understand what life is about, including personal, career, government, the world, etc.”

“To provide guidance, support, and role modeling to individuals whom haven't had the opportunities or don't have the background to fulfill their potential within their current circumstances.”

Six respondents (6.2%) referenced believing in the mission of the organization or in the organization itself.

Social function. Two respondents (2.0%) referred to the company of others, such as volunteers and staff. Two (2.0%) referenced being directly asked by someone in the organization, which one person described as “helping a friend who works at the site.”

Focus group participants tended to validate the idea that volunteers tend to feel drawn to the supportive community of volunteering, which may include youth, other volunteers, and staff.

Understanding function.

Task-specific. Nine respondents (9.2%) referenced being motivated by the tasks associated with the volunteer role. Most commonly these were teaching, tutoring, or boat building. One respondent referred both to a desire to give back to the community and to “fulfill a personal need to teach.” “Amanda,” in the focus group, noted that she really enjoyed the challenges associated with trying to “get the task to fit the kids.”

English Language Learners or diverse populations. Fourteen responses (14.4%) included specific motivations pertaining to working with New Americans, English Language Learners, or diverse populations. Examples include:

“I like being able to help English language learners make their way in their new country. I regard these new Americans as local and national treasures.”

“I love working with immigrant kids who may need a little extra help to succeed and go on to college.”

Experience or learning. Nine responses (9.2%) referenced gaining experience with a particular task or with young people. Some of these responses referred to career-based experience whereas others just referenced a desire for increased understanding. Typically, these responses crossed over into other themes, such as a desire to better understand a certain group. Example include:

“I need to do this for a class but I am also interested in becoming a teacher and really enjoy this. It's helping me to decide what kind of teacher and if its something I will truly enjoy.”

“In order to make an impact in my community and also to gain experience with working with diverse populations.”

Themes beyond Clary and Snyder's functional categories. While the themes discussed correspond nicely with the values, social, and understanding functions, several themes emerged that transcend or do not fit as neatly into the functional categories.

Mentoring or a relationship. Twenty-three (23.7%) of the open-ended responses referenced mentoring or building on a relationship. Such responses referenced wanting to develop a relationship with a young person or already having one and wanting to keep it going. Words like “love,” “rapport,” and “bond” referenced motivations specific to one or more relationships volunteers had with youth through their programs. Some volunteers referenced a desire to see a relationship through or continue with youth during important transitions. Some examples include:

“I feel that the program really does make a difference in the lives of the youth involved. I feel that it lays the groundwork for a lifelong relationship to form.”

“I love the two girls I’ve mentored over the past 2 years and was very involved with before that.”

“I started working with my students when they first arrived in the US and were in middle school. I wanted to see them through their high school years.”

“To provide a positive, fun, one-on-one relationship with a child whose parents are often away from home due to work.”

A desire to have or build on a relationship with a youth was typically discussed in terms of values but also insofar as the volunteers valued the relationships themselves. Benefiting from a relationship – inherently a two-way street – could also fall under the social, enhancement, or protective functions. One weakness in Clary and Snyder’s model may be that the Social function refers explicitly to how relationships outside of volunteering are enhanced due to volunteering, but there is not a function that has to do with relationships developed *through* volunteering. These could be with youth, but also with staff and other volunteers.

Required. Nine respondents (9.2%) said that the volunteering was required, usually for a class. Such responses typically referenced other motivations as well, such as:

“It was required for school, but I am now continuing because of the bond I have with my mentee.”

“It is part of my MSW internship and I am mentoring a student who I have known for 4 years. I wanted to continue to work with this student while in my MSW internship.”

Snyder and Omoto (2008) conceptualize volunteerism as something, which must be “performed on the basis of the actor’s free will without bonds of obligation or coercion” (p. 2). Snyder and Omoto (2008) note that while service learning programs and similar volunteer requirements do not meet their strict definition of volunteerism, the distinction becomes blurry as such programs may provide choices, volunteers may not of such programs as coercive, and there are many overlaps between the experiences of volunteering for a requirement and independently. Statements such as the two above suggest that even requirements are rarely stand-alone motivators.

Enjoyment. Twenty-six respondents (26.8%) referenced that they enjoy what they are doing. Many said more specifically that they enjoyed working with young people, although enjoyment often crossed over into other themes, such as enjoying helping or enjoying a relationship. General enjoyment and having fun do not fit well into any of the six functional categories. Examples include:

“I like being able to help encourage kids to do well in school and it's easy and fun.”

“I love volunteering, I like helping people and I enjoy working with kids.”

Free time. Five responses (5.2%) referenced having spare time to give. While many of these responses cited another motivation as well, one just wrote “a positive use

of free time.” The idea that volunteers could be motivated not by the role itself but by a desire to fill up empty time and stave off boredom is not necessarily well reflected in the functional approach framework. Filling up free time may have to do with enhanced self-esteem (Enhancement) or protective functions like forgetting about problems, but there may be something else going on as well. The interesting thing about having time to give is it is one of the few motivations that does not relate to the type of volunteer activity. It does not answer why volunteers chose to work with youth at risk, as opposed to volunteering their time another way.

Perceived similarities between volunteers and youth. The last question in the survey was *“Do you feel you have any similarity (e.g. life experiences or characteristics) with the youth with whom you are volunteering?”* Fifty-nine (64.8%) respondents said yes, and thirty-four respondents elaborated. Six (17.6%) responses referred to remembering being a youth in general. Examples include:

“I remember quite well what it was like to be their age and I understand their feelings about school and their own social lives.”

“We were all kids at one point, looking for guidance.”

Six (17.6%) referenced enjoying the same activities as the youth, such as:

“We are both creative, passionate, thoughtful people who love to cook, think about things, and make art.”

Eight (23.5%) perceived that they had similar values as youth. Examples include:

“I had to work hard in high school and college - nice that the kids I tutor understand that success is not about "talent", it's about perseverance and a healthy routine.”

“She and I have similar personalities. However, we also both grew up in low income homes so we understand this type of living and how budgets are important and how to appreciate what we do get.”

Three respondents (8.8%) referenced learning another language as a commonality. One respondent referred to speaking a common language with the youth that was not English.

Thirteen respondents (38.2%) referenced experiences they shared with the youth. Many of these were specific to the goals of the programs. Examples include:

“Struggled with academics in high school...could have used a mentor.”

“I was a troubled teen with no inspiration or direction.”

“I grew up in a low-resource family and community. i skipped a lot of your questions because they seemed to focus on my being "more fortunate", but really i just enjoy being a part of my community.”

“Grew up without a mother and struggled quite a bit. Thought it was important to mentor a child in same situation that needed or could benefit from a strong female influence in her life.”

“I grew up without a role model and it was difficult to learn everything about life by trial and error.”

“As a child I was in a low income, single parent household and I had a mentor to guide and support me. We also enjoy many of the same activities.”

Summary of motivations and benefits of volunteering. Based on Clary and Snyder’s instruments to assess the functions served by volunteering, volunteers were most motivated by Values, followed by Understanding and then Enhancement. This was assessed through calculating means of individual scores for each functional category, based on the scale assessing Reasons for Volunteering (VFI) and the scale assessing Volunteering Outcomes. Career, Social, and Protective functions did not prove very significant, although the mean Social outcomes score was somewhat higher. That is, the average respondent agreed with that the outcomes tied to the Social function had been achieved.

Among open-ended responses, volunteers most frequently cited themes of giving back, developing mentoring relationships, making a difference for youth, and having fun. Among those who thought they may cease volunteering, all but one noted factors outside the program such as outside constraints on time from school or career. A majority of respondents perceived that there were similarities between themselves and the youth with whom they were working. Among those who specified, the most volunteers perceived that they had shared key experiences with the youth with whom they were working.

Factors Associated with Satisfaction and Duration of Experience

(Section to Be Completed in More Final Version of This Paper)

5. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This capstone research project constituted descriptive research into who is volunteering in Portland's nonprofit youth development programs, what their motivations are, and what benefits they receive. A third research objective, to assess factors associated with satisfaction and duration of volunteer experience, will be examined in a more final version of this paper.

A questionnaire was constructed and distributed using www.surveymonkey.com to approximately 300 volunteers at 9 youth development programs within 5 organizations. A supplemental focus group was also conducted with 5 volunteers from 4 programs. While not a representative sample that can be generalized to the entire nonprofit youth development program population in Portland, the sample that was assessed sheds important light on who is volunteering in these important programs. There was important diversity of characteristics among survey respondents, though certain characteristics dominated, including traits of being female, white, college-educated, medium to high income, and employed full time. Large portions of the sample were also younger, unmarried, and childless.

It is important to allow for the possibility that the nature of the survey tool created some sample bias – more likely to be filled out by educated, native English speakers with more discretionary time. Also, there may be certain traits for which overrepresentation in programs is advantageous. For example, volunteers who are employed full time can help serve as role models to youth who are in school and may not yet see the ultimate point of education. Some programs target employed persons for that reason. While non-native English language tutors could be especially effective through understanding what it is

like to learn English for the first time, a strong foundation in the English language is probably conducive to tutoring confidence and ability.

Also, the prevalence in the literature of the functional approach to understanding volunteer motivations does not necessarily mean Clary and Snyder have adequately captured all of the functions of volunteering through their six functions. Qualitative components of this research suggest that there are both motivations that may not be captured within those six functions, such as desire to form relationships *through* volunteering, and that studies of specific volunteer roles, such as youth development volunteers, can produce more detail about motivations than the six general functions are able to provide.

To the researcher's knowledge, there has not been another study like this. The information, while only a window into the overall youth development volunteer population, can be used by agencies and volunteer management staff as a first step towards assessing who tends to volunteer in their programs. Agencies who are looking for more volunteers who are more representative of the youth in their programs can begin to think about assessing where the gaps are. This may especially apply in mentoring programs that are interested in seeking role models for youth who are the same sex or race or who share similar backgrounds or experiences.

As Portland's more recent waves of immigrants and refugees continue to become more settled in the area, there may be opportunities to involve individuals as volunteers who themselves immigrated and learned English but have since become fluent, gone to college, and found employment. A recent article in the Portland Press Herald about the Make it Happen! program interviewed Mohamed Hassan, who spoke for many fathers in

admitting “he finds the college application process a confounding mystery” (Portland Press Herald, 2013). In particular when many parents are unable to provide the assistance they would like to their children, volunteers who made it to college despite similar challenges may offer unique and valuable perspectives.

Another consideration in developing more diverse groups of volunteers should be in the large amount of research on the benefits to be had from volunteering. Evidence that volunteering is associated with things like improved employability, increased mental health, and enhanced feelings of community (Ohmer, 2007; Wilson, 2012) should drive up motivation to include more individuals in the activity of volunteering. This may mean more involvement of groups like retirees, the underemployed, and recent immigrants who may have time to give and enormous benefits to be had from sharing their knowledge, experiences, and resources with youth.

The information about volunteer motivations provided by this study can also be of use to nonprofit youth development programs, which rely on volunteers to deliver quality programming. Clary, et. al (1998) found that persuasive messages about volunteering are effective to the extent that they correspond with volunteers’ functional motivations as measured through the VFI. Based on the results of that and similar studies and the results of this study, the most persuasive advertisements of youth development volunteer opportunities may be those that appeal to volunteers’ values. Volunteers want to help, but more specifically, they want to make a difference in their communities and in the lives of youth. Following that, advertisements may also choose to highlight the potential for learning and increased understanding. Based on qualitative feedback in the study, it

seems advertisements appealing to learning may be particularly effective in cases where volunteers may get the chance to interact with and learn about other cultures or groups.

Conclusions can also be drawn from these results and the extensive research suggesting that volunteers are happier and more committed if their experiences correspond with their motivations for volunteering (Clary, et. al, 1998; Davis, Hall, & Meyer, 2003; Snyder and Omoto, 2008; Snyder and Omoto, 2009; Wilson, 2012). Organizations involved in the study may want to make sure their volunteers have opportunities to express their values and to gain understanding, since those seem to be some of the most dominant functions served by volunteering.

Of course, it is possible that certain functions scores highly because the volunteers for whom volunteering serves other functions – such as gaining career experience – do not stick around as long. In other words, it may be that the nature of these programs is such that volunteers are very likely to be provided with the chances to express values and to learn on the job. As direct service programs, all of the programs involved in the study do offer volunteers a chance to gain hands-on experience and see the immediate outcomes of their efforts. This may appeal greatly to those who are strongly motivated by Understanding and Values.

Especially in light of the possibility that volunteers motivated by certain functions might be more likely to stick with their commitments, organization might want to explore using something like the VFI as an intake instrument. Understanding what new volunteers are looking for out of their experiences would better enable organizations to support those volunteers. If it turns out a volunteer is motivated in part by gaining experience for a youth-related career, for example, there may be specific ways to support

that volunteer so he or she is more likely to continue working with youth. An agency could offer career-related trainings or recognition awards to better support its career-oriented volunteers.

There is much more research to be done, but this study should offer a window into who is volunteering in Portland's nonprofit youth development programs and why.

Evidence suggests that youth with supportive adults in their lives have better outcomes and that volunteers can step in as supportive adults to improve those outcomes. The stakes could not be higher. While there are many wonderful individuals who choose to commit their time, love, and talent to youth dealing with adversity, there are many more youth in need and many more individuals who are not involved. Understanding which groups are less likely to be connected with such volunteer opportunities, which groups are, and why particular individuals feel compelled to get involved with youth can help build the capacity of agencies that rely on volunteers to improve youth outcomes.

Volunteers such as those in the sample, who are overwhelmingly satisfied with their experiences, may provide great resources for further volunteer recruitment and even for addressing public stigma and perceptions around youth from disadvantaged backgrounds.

REFERENCES

- Balfanz, R. (2013, February). *Overcoming the poverty challenge to enable college and career readiness for all: The crucial role of student supports*. Retrieved from the Johns Hopkins University School of Education Everyone Graduates Center website: http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/StudentSupports_forScreenViewing.pdf
- Belfield, C. R., Levin, H. M., & Rosen, R. (2012, January). *The economic value of opportunity youth*. Retrieved from the Civic Enterprises website: http://www.civicenterprises.net/MediaLibrary/Docs/econ_value_opportunity_youth.pdf.
- Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2013, Februarya). *Household data annual averages: 11. Employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity* [Data file]. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.htm>
- Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2013, Februaryb). *Volunteering in the United States – 2012* [Press release]. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/volun.pdf>.
- Clary, E.G., Snyder, M., Ridge, R.D., Copeland, J., Stukas, A.A., Haugen, J., & Miene, P. (1998). Understanding and assessing the motivations of volunteers: A functional approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74, 1516-1530.
- Clary, E. G., & Snyder, M. (1999). The motivations to volunteer: Theoretical and practical considerations. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 8(5), 156-159.
- Corporation for National & Community Service. (2007). The health benefits of volunteering: A review of recent research. Retrieved from http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/07_0506_hbr.pdf
- Corporation for National & Community Service. (2013). *Volunteering and civic engagement in Maine* [Data file]. Retrieved from <http://www.volunteeringinamerica.gov/me>.
- Corporation for National & Community Service. (2012, December). *Volunteering and civic life in America 2012: Key findings on the volunteer participation and civic health of the nation*. Retrieved from <http://www.volunteeringinamerica.gov/assets/resources/FactSheetFinal.pdf>.
- Dávila, M.C., & Diaz-Morales, J.F. (2009). Age and motives for volunteering: Further evidence. *Europe's Journal of Psychology*, 5(2), 82-95.
- Davis, M. H., Hall, J. A., & Meyer, M. (2003). The first year: Influences on the satisfaction, involvement, and persistence of new community volunteers. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 29, 248–260. doi:

10.1177/0146167202239050

DuBois, D. L., Holloway, B. E., Valentine, J. C., & Cooper, H. (2002). Effectiveness of mentoring programs for youth: A meta-analytic review. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 30*(2), 157-197.

Finkelstein, M.A. (2008). Predictors of volunteer time: The changing contributions of motive fulfillment and role identity. *Social Behavior and Personality, 36*(10), 1353-1364. doi: 10.2224/sbp.2008.36.10.1353

Foster-Bey, J., Dietz, N., & Grimm, R. (2006). Executive summary: Volunteers mentoring youth: Implications for closing the mentoring gap. Retrieved from Corporation for National & Community Service website:
http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/06_0503_mentoring_execsummary.pdf

Foster-Bey, J. (2008). Do race, ethnicity, citizenship and socio-economic status determine civic engagement? (The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement Working Paper #62). Retrieved from
http://www.civicyouth.org/PopUps/WorkingPapers/WP62_Foster.Bey.pdf

Grossman, J., & Rhodes, J. (2002). The test of time: Predictors and effects of duration in youth mentoring relationships. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 30*(2), 199-219.

Handy, F., & Greenspan, Itay. (2008). Immigrant volunteering: A stepping stone to intergration? *Nonprofit and Volunteer Sector Quarterly, 38*(6), 956-982. doi: 10.1177/0899764008324455

Hidalgo, M. C., & Moreno, P. (2009). Organizational Socialization of Volunteers: The effect of their intention to remain. *Journal of Community Psychology, 37*(5), 594-601. doi:10.1002/jcop.20317

Jones, K., Doveston, M., & Rose, Richard. (2008). The motivations of mentors: promoting relationships, supporting pupils, engaging with communities. *Pastoral Care in Education, 27*(1), 41-51. doi: 10.1080/02643940902733167

Kane, T. (2004). *The impact of after-school programs: Interpreting the results of four recent evaluations*. Retrieved from:
http://www.ilaborate.org/fetch/william_t_grant_foundation_7353.pdf

Kennelly, L., and Monrad, M. (2007). *Approaches to dropout prevention: Heeding early warning signs with appropriate interventions*. Retrieved from National High School Center website:
http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/nhsc_approachestodropoutprevention.pdf

Kulik, L. (2007). Explaining responses to volunteering: An ecological model. *Nonprofit*

- and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 36(2), 239-255. doi:
10.1177/0899764006295994
- Lauer, P.A., Akiba, M., Wilkerson, S.B., Aporp, H.S., Snow, D., & Martin-Glenn, M.L. (2006). Out-of-School-Time Programs: A Meta-Analysis of Effects for At-Risk Students. *Review of Educational Research*, 76 (2), 275-313. doi:
10.3102/00346543076002275
- Liang, B., & West, J. (2007). *Youth mentoring: Do race and ethnicity really matter?* (Research in Action Issue 9). Retrieved from MENTOR website:
http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_390.pdf
- Maine Children's Alliance. (2012). *Maine kids count*. Retrieved from
http://www.mekids.org/assets/files/databooks/2012/2012MaineKidsCount_web.pdf
- Maine Children's Cabinet, Afterschool Workgroup. (2008, March). *Reaching potential through quality afterschool* (LD 1369 Resolve 41). Retrieved from:
www.maineafterschool.net/reaching%20potential.pdf
- Maine Commission for Community Service. (2010). *Enhancing the capacity of Maine's volunteer sector: Volunteer sector status report and 2010-2013 strategic plan*. Retrieved from
http://www.volunteermaine.org/shared_media/publications/old/2010-Final-Maine-Strategic-Plan-adopted-17June.pdf
- Mellor, D., Hayashi, Y., Stokes, M., Firth, L., Lake, L., Staples, M., Chambers, S., & Cummins, R. (2009). Volunteering and its relationship with personal and neighborhood well-being. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 38(1), 144-159. doi: 10.1177/0899764008317971
- MENTOR. (2009). *Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring*. Retrieved from National Mentoring Partnership website:
http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_1222.pdf
- Metlife Foundation. (2008, May). *Afterschool innovations in brief*. Retrieved from:
http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/Afterschool%20In%20Brief_08.pdf.
- Metlife Foundation. (2009, September). *Afterschool alert issue brief* (Issue Brief No. 40). Retrieved from
http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/issue_briefs/issue_mentoring_40.pdf.
- Muskie School of Public Service. (2012). *Changing Maine: Maine's changing population and housing 1990-2010*. Retrieved from
<http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/PDF/ChangingMaine2012.pdf>

- National Public Radio. (2011). *Series overview: The cost of dropping out*. Retrieved from <http://www.npr.org/2011/07/24/138508517/series-overview-the-cost-of-dropping-out>.
- Nesbit, R. (2012). The influence of major life cycle events on volunteering. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 41, 1153. doi: 10.1177/0899764011429181
- Ohmer, M. L. (2007). Citizen participation in neighborhood organizations and its relationship to volunteers' self- and collective efficacy and sense of community. *Social Work Research*, 31(2), 109-120. doi: 10.1093/swr/31.2.109
- Opportunity Nation. (2013). *Maine* [Data file]. Retrieved from <http://opportunityindex.org/#4.00/36/-89.793/-/Maine>
- Portland Press Herald. (May 19, 2013). Our view: Confusing process blocks college opportunity. Retrieved from http://www.pressherald.com/opinion/confusing-process-blocks-college-opportunity_2013-05-21.html
- Portland Public Schools. (2013). *Fast facts – Spring 2013*. Retrieved from <http://www2.portlandschools.org/sites/default/files/Fast%20Facts%20Spring%202013.pdf>
- Rhodes, J. (2002). *Stand by me*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Rhodes, J. (2005, February). *Research corner: The critical ingredient in afterschool programs*. Retrieved from National Mentoring Partnership website: www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_1311.pdf
- Shierholz, H., Sabadish, N., & Wething, H. (2012). *Labor market for young graduates remains grim* (Economic Policy Institute Briefing Paper #340). Retrieved from <http://www.epi.org/publication/bp340-labor-market-young-graduates/>
- Snyder, M., & Omoto, A. M. (2008). Volunteerism: Social issues, perspectives and social policy implications. *Social Issues and Policy Review*, 2(1), 1-36. doi: 0.1111/j.1751-2409.2008.00009.x
- Snyder, M., & Omoto, A. M. (2009). Who gets involved and why: The psychology of volunteerism. In Liu, E. S. C., Holosko, M. J., & Lo, T. W. (Eds.), *Youth Empowerment and Volunteerism: Principles, Policies, and Practices* (3-26). Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong Press.
- Sundeen, R. A., Garcia, C., & Raskoff, S. A. (2008). Ethnicity, acculturation, and volunteering to organizations: A comparison of African Americans, Asians, Hispanics and Whites. *Nonprofit and Volunteer Sector Quarterly*, 38(6), 929-955. doi: 10.1177/0899764008322779

- Tang, F., Copeland, V. C., & Wexler, S. (2012). Racial differences in volunteer engagement by older adults: An empowerment perspective. *Social Work Research*, 36(2), 89-100. doi: 10.1093/swr/svs009
- Teasdale, S. (2008). *Volunteering among groups deemed at risk of social exclusion*. Retrieved from Institute for Volunteering Researching website: <http://www.ivr.org.uk/component/ivr/volunteering-among-groups-deemed-of-social-exclusion>
- The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2010). Early warning! Why reading by the end of third grade matters. Retrieved from http://www.aecf.org/~media/Pubs/Initiatives/KIDS%20COUNT/123/2010KCSpecReport/AEC_report_color_highres.pdf
- The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2012). *Youth and work: Restoring teen and young adult connections to opportunity*. Retrieved from <http://www.aecf.org/~media/Pubs/Initiatives/KIDS%20COUNT/Y/youthandworkpolicyreport/kidscountyouthandwork.pdf>
- Tierney, J.P., Grossman, J.B., & Resch, N.L. (1995). *Making a difference: An impact study of Big Brothers Big Sisters*. Retrieved from the Public/Private Ventures web site: http://www.seriousgiving.org/files/unitedstates/BBBS/111_publication.pdf
- United States Census Bureau. (2013, January). *Portland(city), Maine* [Data file]. Retrieved from <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/23/2360545.html>
- U.S. Department of Education. (2001). *Evidence that tutoring works*. Retrieved from <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/ERIC-ED464343/pdf/ERIC-ED464343.pdf>
- Wilson, J. (2012). Volunteerism research: A review essay. *Nonprofit and Volunteer Sector Quarterly*, 41(2), 176-212. doi: 10.1177/0899764011434558

APPENDIX

Table 1. Participating Organizations and Programs			
Organization	Program(s)	Focus	Population served
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern Maine	Community-based mentoring	One-on-one mentoring in the community	Elementary through high school
	Site-based mentoring	One-on-one mentoring in school-based settings	Elementary through high school
LearningWorks	LearningWorks Afterschool	Tutoring/Academic support	Elementary school
	Youth Building Alternatives	Tutoring/Academic support	16-24, out-of-school and/or on probation
	Evening Study Center	Tutoring/Academic support	Middle and high school
Portland Public Schools	Make it Happen!, Multilingual Multicultural Center	Tutoring/Academic support for English Language Learners	Middle and high school
	Portland Mentoring Alliance, Portland High School	One-on-one mentoring	High school
Portland Housing Authority	Study Centers	Tutoring/Academic support	Elementary through high school
Spurwink Services	Compass Project	Boat-building; Academic, job, and life skills training	Middle and high school

Table 2. Participating Organizations and Programs Missions or Program Descriptions	
Organization or Program	Language from Organization Website
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern Maine	<p>“Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern Maine is committed to providing children facing adversity with strong and enduring, professionally supported 1-to-1 relationships that change their lives for the better, forever.”</p> <p>http://www.somebigs.org</p>
LearningWorks	<p>“Providing the best learning opportunities in Southern Maine for at-risk youth, the immigrant community, and low-income families.”</p> <p>http://www.learningworks.me</p>
Make it Happen! (Portland Public Schools)	<p>“Make It Happen! is a program that pairs English Language Learners in grades 8-12 with volunteer academic coaches to provide personalized, structured academic and social support.”</p> <p>http://www.portlandschools.org/schools/multilingual/makeithappen.html</p>
Portland Mentoring Alliance (Portland Public Schools)	<p>“...volunteer employees from business throughout Greater Portland have been matched with Portland High School students to create supportive mentoring relationships. The program focuses on academic success, post secondary planning and socialization as experienced in a one-on-one relationship.”</p> <p>http://blogs.portlandschools.org/phspma/</p>
Portland Housing Authority	<p>“The Portland Housing Authority (PHA) Study Centers are an after-school program that serves low income students in and around Public Housing in Portland, Maine...The centers' collective goal is to help students become academically and socially successful and thus remain in school.”</p> <p>http://phastudycenters.weebly.com</p>
Compass Project (Spurwink Services)	<p>“The Compass Project mission is to use boat building and rowing to provide positive direction to youth by encouraging the development of personal responsibility and community and environmental engagement. Our experiential learning programs integrate academic, job and life skills training with boat building and rowing to help youth stay in school and find new career directions.”</p> <p>http://compassproject.org/site/</p>

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Tutoring/academic program - English Language Learners	37.6%	38
Tutoring/academic program - General focus	19.8%	20
Enrichment Program - Mostly Non-Academic (Art, Sports, etc.)	10.9%	11
One-on-one mentoring program - Mostly Non-Academic	48.5%	49
Job skills program	4.0%	4
Mental health/emotional support program	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)		9

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Tutoring or providing homework support	51.0%	52
Mentoring (Meeting one on one with a youth primarily for non-academic purposes)	50.0%	51
Teaching, planning, or leading activities	13.7%	14
Supervising or managing behavior	2.9%	3
Playing (Sports, games, etc.)	22.5%	23
Don't know	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)		3

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Volunteer more than 8 hours weekly	0.0%	0
Volunteer 4-8 hours weekly	9.1%	9
Volunteer 2-4 hours weekly	37.4%	37
Volunteer 1-2 hours weekly	42.4%	42
Volunteer less than 1 hour weekly	1.0%	1
Don't volunteer weekly but volunteer once or more each month	10.1%	10
Used to volunteer regularly but now do so occasionally	0.0%	0
No longer volunteering	0.0%	0

Other (please specify)	3
------------------------	---

Table 6. Length of Time Volunteering with Program		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than one month	7.8%	8
Between one and three months	21.6%	22
Between three and six months	13.7%	14
Between six months and one year	7.8%	8
Between one and three years	30.4%	31
More than three years	18.6%	19
Don't know	0.0%	0

Table 7. Age		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Under 20	1.1%	1
20-29	37.4%	34
30-39	18.7%	17
40-49	7.7%	7
50-59	14.3%	13
60-69	12.1%	11
70-79	7.7%	7
80 or above	1.1%	1

Table 8. Education		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than high school	0.0%	0
Some high school - No diploma	0.0%	0
High school grad - Diploma or Equivalent (GED)	1.1%	1
Some college but no degree	14.4%	13
Associate's Degree	5.6%	5
Bachelor's Degree	36.7%	33
Master's, Professional, or Doctoral Degree	42.2%	38

Table 9. Family Income		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than \$15,000	5.6%	5
15,000 to 24,999	4.4%	4
25,000 to 34,999	14.4%	13
35,000 to 49,999	11.1%	10
50,000 to 74,999	24.4%	22
75,000 to 99,999	15.6%	14
100,000 or more	14.4%	13
No answer	10.0%	9

Table 10. Overall Satisfaction with Volunteer Experience		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very dissatisfied	2.0%	2
Dissatisfied	0.0%	0
Neutral	3.9%	4
Satisfied	30.4%	31
Very satisfied	62.7%	64
Don't know	1.0%	1

Table 11. Reasons for Volunteering	
<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean Value</i>
CAREER	
Volunteering can help me get my foot in the door at a place where I'd like to work.	2.6
I can make new contacts that might help my business career.	2.6
Volunteering allows me to explore different career options.	3.1
Volunteering will help me succeed in my chosen profession.	2.9
Volunteering experience will look good on my resume.	3.1
Career Reasons Overall	2.8
SOCIAL	
My friends volunteer.	2.6
People I'm close to want me to volunteer.	2.4
People I know share an interest in community service.	4.4
Others with whom I am close place a high value on community service.	4.3
Volunteering is an important activity to the people I know best.	3.5
Social Reasons Overall	3.4
VALUES	
I am concerned about those less fortunate than myself.	6.3
I am genuinely concerned about the particular group I am serving.	6.2
I feel compassion toward people in need.	6.2
I feel it is important to help others.	6.5
I can do something for a cause that is important to me.	6.1
Values Reasons Overall	6.2
UNDERSTANDING	
I can learn more about the cause for which I am working.	4.6
Volunteering allows me to gain a new perspective on things.	6.0
Volunteering lets me learn through direct "hands on" experience.	5.4
I can learn how to deal with a variety of people.	4.9
I can explore my own strengths.	4.9
Understanding Reasons Overall	5.1
ENHANCEMENT	
Volunteering makes me feel important.	4.0
Volunteering increases my self-esteem.	3.9
Volunteering makes me feel needed.	4.0
Volunteering makes me feel better about myself.	4.2
Volunteering is a way to make new friends.	4.4
Enhancement Reasons Overall	4.0
PROTECTIVE	
No matter how bad I've been feeling, volunteering helps me to forget about it.	4.3
By volunteering, I feel less lonely.	2.9
Doing volunteer work relieves me of some of the guilt over being more fortunate.	2.8
Volunteering helps me work through my own personal problems.	2.7
Volunteering is a good escape from my own troubles.	2.5
Protective Reasons Overall	3.0

Table 12. Volunteering Outcomes	
<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean Value</i>
CAREER	
In volunteering with this organization, I made new contacts that might help my business or career.	3.0
As a volunteer in this organization, I have been able to explore possible career options.	2.7
Career Outcomes Overall	2.9
SOCIAL	
People I know best know that I am volunteering at this organization.	5.0
My friends found out that I am volunteering at this organization.	4.3
Social Outcomes Overall	4.6
VALUES	
People I am genuinely concerned about are being helped through my volunteer work at this organization.	5.7
Through volunteering here, I am doing something for a cause that I believe in.	6.3
Values Outcomes Overall	6.0
ENHANCEMENT	
From volunteering at this organization, I feel better about myself.	4.8
My self-esteem is enhanced by performing volunteer work in this organization.	4.4
Enhancement Outcomes Overall	4.6
PROTECTIVE	
Volunteering at this organization allows me the opportunity to escape some of my own troubles.	2.7
By volunteering at this organization, I have been able to work through some of my own personal problems.	2.6
Protective Outcomes Overall	2.6
UNDERSTANDING	
I have learned how to deal with a greater variety of people through volunteering at this organization.	5.1
I have been able to learn more about the cause for which I am working by volunteering with this organization.	5.4
Understanding Outcomes Overall	5.2
SATISFACTION	
I am enjoying my volunteer experience.	6.4
My volunteer experience has been personally fulfilling.	6.3
This experience of volunteering with this organization has been a worthwhile one.	6.5
I have been able to make an important contribution by volunteering at this organization.	6.1
I have accomplished a great deal of “good” through my volunteer work at this organization.	5.7
Satisfaction Outcomes Overall	6.2