

Reflections on VolunteerNOW's Role in the Macomb Area

Elizabeth Swisher Coordinator
2008-09

Based on my experience over the past year, Macomb seems to be a community with a general "help-a-neighbor-out" mentality. Even so, those interested in getting involved don't always know how to go about doing so, and organizations struggle to attract and keep volunteers. Although these issues are not unique to Macomb, the fact that they exist here suggests that there are unmet needs that Volunteer NOW can help to address. The question, then, is the following: What exactly should volunteer NOW's role be, and how can it be most effective as an organization?

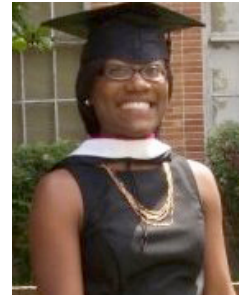
Volunteer NOW's history reflects a collaborative effort on the part of many individuals in the Macomb area; what started as a small seed of an idea has grown into an established organization. Volunteer NOW is fortunate to have a dedicated group of Board of Directors and has benefited from the generosity of many individuals and organizations in the Macomb area since its inception in 2004. Volunteer NOW currently serves the community through activities such as promoting volunteer opportunities, providing volunteer management training opportunities, and organizing community service events.

With growth, at times come challenges. While important not to discount the positive, the effectiveness of any non-profit must be measured based on results and impact, and not simply good intentions. Especially in looking at long-term sustainability, it is necessary to constantly re-evaluate and look for ways to improve.

With strong leadership and community support, I am optimistic that Volunteer NOW can continue to adapt in order to serve the Macomb area in the best way possible, long into the future..

THANKS ELIZABETH FOR A JOB WELL
DONE! GOOD LUCK AND HAVE A GOOD
LIFE.

The Volunteer NOW Board.



Andrea Bell named new VolunteerNOW
Coordinator

As Elizabeth Swisher completes her term of service this month, Andrea Bell will be the Volunteered NOW Coordinator. Bell will serve as an Illinois Campus Compact AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteers for 2009-2010. She will start the last week in August. Originally from St. Louis, Missouri, Bell is a recent graduate of Rhodes College with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration. Her prior experience includes working in the Rhodes admissions office, completing an internship at Macy's, volunteering at Casa Maria, and serving as the philanthropy chair for her senior class. Expressing her commitment to volunteerism and service, she stated, "It doesn't take much to give back, but the result is immeasurable." Welcome, Andrea!

Summer VISTA Associate serves the Macomb Community

As an Illinois Campus Compact Summer VISTA Associate, Deanna Lang spent eight weeks this summer in the Macomb community. Lang participated in several direct service projects, volunteering at Loaves and Fishes, The Crossing Thrift Store, and with PRIME. Lang expressed that she enjoyed her experience and plans to continue volunteering in the future: "I learned a lot about volunteering, and plan to do some after school starts with the local church ministries" in her college town of Hickory, North Carolina. Many thanks to Deanna for her service this summer and best wishes in her future plans!

Upcoming Event: West Central Illinois Volunteerism Conference

The third annual West Central Illinois Volunteerism Conference will take place on Thursday, October 29 at Wesley United Methodist Church in Macomb. VolunteerNOW is partnering with several other organizations to plan the event. Volunteer leaders of public/private organizations, nonprofit directors, business and community leaders, students, and leaders of faith-based programs will benefit from attending the conference. Sessions will be offered on a range of topics such as volunteer recruitment and retention, communication practices, grant writing and national service. Brochures and registration forms will be available soon. Also coming soon (early September), check out the brand-new conference website at www.wcivc.net for more details. Questions?

Please contact VolunteerNOW at 309-836-3754 or West Central Illinois RSVP at 217-357-2098.

VolunteerNOW Support

Financial contributions and other support provided by:

- Macomb Area Businesses
- Private Donations
- Annual Fundraising Dinner
- Illinois Campus Compact AmeriCorps*VISTA program
- City of Macomb

Your contribution can be mailed to VolunteerNOW at the address in the right hand column.

Agencies: Keep Your Information Up-To-Date

- Please review your entries on the VolunteerNOW website:
- List new volunteer needs.
- Do you have annual events?
- Do you have questions?
- Call VolunteerNOW at 309-836-3754.

CONTACT US AT:

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www.osa.wiu.edu/getinvolved/volunteer/



Nora Baldner will be our luncheon key note speaker. Nora is the Branch Director for the Arthritis Foundation in Quincy, Illinois. Nora is host of the Nora Baldner Ladies Classic Golf Tournaments, (in Quincy and in Macomb), that benefit the Arthritis Foundation.

Save the date!

West Central Illinois Volunteerism Conference

October 29, 2009
Wesley UMC in Macomb

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