

PROCEEDINGS FROM A CONFERENCE
AND SUBSEQUENT PLANNING MEETINGS ON
YOUTH SERVICE IN MICHIGAN

*THE MAKING OF A
NEW GENERATION OF SERVICE*

June 10 & 11, 1991
Kellogg Center,
East Lansing, Michigan

July 15, 1991
Holiday Inn,
Lansing, Michigan

July 31, 1991
Kellogg Center
East Lansing, Michigan

SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS

Council of Michigan Foundations
Michigan Board of Education
Michigan Campus Compact
Michigan Nonprofit Forum
National Governors' Association
Youth Service America

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INTEREST GROUP CAUCUS DISCUSSIONS

Groups from five youth service interest areas, Community-Based Organizations, K-12, Service and Conservation Corps, Higher Education, and Youth Involvement, met to discuss youth service issues in their respective fields and opportunities for program development. Below is a summary their recommendations.

COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS

The group representing Community-Based Organizations began their discussion by identifying common goals. They were most interested with developing means for drawing youth into their organizations. They recognized youth service as both a method of youth development and a practical approach for recruiting youth into their organizations.

Common Goals:

- Design a system that values young people as resources
- Promote educational development and growth
- Encourage young people to commit to community service
- Involve young people in issue areas that concern them
- Recognize service as part of personal development
- Identify collaboration links and program resources
- Expand positive opportunities for young people
- Recognize the short- and long-term value of youth service

The group produced a ten point list for developing opportunities for youth service. The group emphasized the importance of training and state-wide, inter-organizational network development. They also stressed the importance of providing meaningful opportunities for youth to share in this process. There should be a sustained and coordinated connection between youth service programs and broader volunteer efforts.

Points for Development:

- Training programs for adults, youth, and agencies
- Inter-organizational information networks
- Youth Ownership
- Community agency ownership
- Long-term, broad-based community support
- Institutionalize youth service
- Evaluate individual and state-wide programs
- Volunteer Recognition
- Criteria for program development
- Link youth service and other voluntary efforts

Limited training, staffing, and funding are seen as challenges to attaining these goals. Young people must also have visible leadership roles.. The task of increasing youth leadership opportunities in these efforts without causing concern among adults in established roles requires careful attention.

Points for Development:

- Joint (MCC/NBA) use and development of resources and programs
- Create a state-wide youth corps advisory council
- Involve educators in corps efforts
- Increase leveraging of JTPA, Vocational Education, CDBG, and Vocational Rehabilitation funds
- Develop overall (MCC/NBA) coordination
- Identify a spokesperson for youth service
- Explore the feasibility of a state-wide youth service corporation
- Create a bipartisan state commission with representatives from corporations, corps, community-based organizations, foundations, youth, labor, and state agencies
- Involve the private sector in funding, personnel, training, and mentoring
- Improve private sector local support

Additional Points:

- Ensure that the definition of service includes corps programs
- Explore broad collaborations based on more than those suggested in the National and Community Service Act.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Representatives from colleges and universities drew up a list of important points that will advance service in their institutions. Youth community service should be fully integrated into all aspects of campus life. Colleges and universities should increase their collaboration with other organizations that are involved in youth service. Special emphasis should be made in linking campuses to the communities around them. Training workshops and community service programs on all campuses throughout the state are also priorities.

Points for Development:

- Push for a Governor's comprehensive youth service plan
- Promote an integrated service curriculum
- Promote service research
- Promote collaborative programs with K-12, teacher training, community activities, and youth leadership
- Create new service approaches such as:
 - College student corps programs
 - Involving non-traditional students
 - Internships
- Develop active programs on all Michigan campuses
- Use college students in building other programs
- Institutionalize service learning in the university structure

YOUTH INVOLVEMENT

The youth attending the conference came up with three broad categories of interest: service opportunities, quality and quantity of programs, and ways to instill a lifetime ethic of service.

COLLABORATION CAUCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

On the second day conference participants were divided into four inter-interest groups to collaboratively explore future directions for youth service in Michigan. The recommendations of the four groups shared similar themes. Therefore the summary combines group reports into three thematic categories: diversity, youth leadership, and educational issues.

DIVERSITY

Youth service programs should emphasize diverse participation. Diversity should reflect gender, age, culture, race, and class. Intergenerational and mentoring programs are important models with which to connect. The caucus groups indicated that young people, Native Americans, youth service program operators, and people from northern communities and Detroit should have greater representation in future youth service activities.

Increase Participation of:

- Youth, including at-risk
- Metro Detroit
- Northern Communities
- Native American communities
- Youth service program operators

Consider Linking:

- Intergenerational projects
- Mentoring programs
- Joint projects (Higher Ed. and K-12)
- Collaborative community action councils

YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Community agencies must develop and display trust in young people. Community organizations and schools should be encouraged to take risks and try new things to involve young people. Public relations campaigns to highlight positive contributions of youth service can improve perceptions about the value of youth contributions to the community. Agencies should create development tracks for young people to grow into positions responsibility. Young people should be involved in program planning. Youth should be allowed to share in program ownership by contributing to projects from inception through implementation. Youth involvement should not be limited to established youth leaders. Youth service can develop new leaders among young people.

Enhancing Community Agency-youth Relations:

- Give project operators and schools room to try new things
- Create a broad range of opportunities for youth
- Promote youth accomplishments
- Establish local advisory groups to ensure projects meet local needs

COLLABORATION CAUCUS RECOMMENDATIONS

SHORT-TERM

The most important step for Michigan take at this time is the formation of an advisory committee to determine the state's plan for applying for federal funds available through the National and Community Service Act of 1990. The committee should decide on goals and draft a comprehensive proposal for the federal funding. The committee should seek reaction from various organizations and individuals before submitting the application and continue to seek the advice and counsel of program practitioners in future initiatives.

Goals of steering committee:

- Review notes from conference
- Draft proposal of state-wide youth service plan
- Circulate proposal to various groups
- Draft final plan for federal funds and long-term strategy

Conference participants expressed concern that steering committee membership should be diverse based on age, geography, and program background. Young people should be included. An appropriate size for the group should be 15 people. The committee should be a working committee. Lansing is an appropriate central meeting location.

Committee membership:

- Should be 15
- Must include people of various backgrounds
- The committee should be a working
- Must include young people

Groups and individuals should be encouraged to form local coalitions in their communities. Information from the conference should be shared with non-participants.

Activities outside the Committee:

- Formation of local coalitions
- Spreading of information to conference non-participants
- YSA will Disseminate follow-up materials to all participants

LONG-TERM

Although the conference participants could not anticipate the results of the federal funding process, they began formulating long-term goals for the state's youth community service initiative.

The steering committee should evolve into a bipartisan, state task force with responsibility of coordinating technical support for all programs throughout the state. Assistance necessary includes state-wide training and networking conferences for youth and agencies,

THE FIRST FOLLOW-UP PLANNING MEETING
July 15, 1991 at the Holiday Inn, Lansing, Michigan
Hosted by the Council of Michigan Foundations

On July 15, 1991 the Council of Michigan Foundations hosted a day-long meeting in Lansing for self-selected participants of the June 10-11 conference and additional interested parties to continue planning for the Michigan youth service initiative. Dorothy Johnson, the President of the Council of Michigan Foundations welcomed participants and called the meeting to order. Ms. Johnson and members of her staff including Kathy Agard and Jim McHale were joined by representatives of the meeting's co-sponsoring organizations: Diana Algra, Executive Director of the Michigan Campus Compact; Maryellen Lewis, Executive Director of the Michigan NonProfit Forum; Roberta Stanley, Executive Assistant Superintendent for State and Federal Relations, Michigan Department of Education; and Frank Dirks, Field Organizer for Youth Service America.

The special guest for the meeting was Michelle Engler, the First Lady of Michigan. Ms. Engler was accompanied by Stephanie Comai-Page, Social Welfare Policy Advisor from the Governor's Office. Maura Wolfe, Youth Engaged in Service Coordinator for the Points of Light Foundation also attended the meeting.

After Ms. Johnson's opening remarks, Ms. Engler outlined the state's response since the June Conference.

- Governor Engler will appoint a commission on youth service.
- Michelle Engler will chair the commission.
- The commission will develop Michigan's funding application to the National and Community Service Commission.
- Michigan's commission will focus on youth service.
- The commission will be housed, at least initially, in the Executive Office of the Governor.
- The commission should be appointed by mid-August.
- Projections of size range from 15 to 21 commission members.
- The commission will be representative of the diversity of the state.
- The commission will have an indefinite term. It will be created by executive order and can only be ended with an executive order.
- Initially, commission members will have staggered terms- 1/3 for 1 year, 1/3 for 2 years, and 1/3 for three years. Ultimately, membership will be three years.
- Meeting participants should submit nominations for commission members to Stephanie Comai-Page. The Governor's Office has already collecting names.
- Young people will be represented on the commission.
- Provisions are being made to staff the commission. The Governor's Office is also seeking names for the position of Executive Director for the commission.
- The participants of this and the June meeting will serve as an informal advisory group for the commission.

Following Ms. Engler's comments the co-sponsors offered some remarks.

The group reviewed the basic themes drawn from the June conference.

- Promote collaboration.
- Build program capacity.
- Ensure program sustainability beyond support through the Act.
- Draw on the strength and experience of existing programs and organizations.
- Consider new and alternative program and organizational approaches and arrangements.
- Promote program and participant diversity.

The group then reviewed issues of particular interest to the National Commission that should be addressed in a state application.

- The plan should be comprehensive.
- The plan should promote and support program and organizational collaboration.
- The plan should be sustainable.
- Funding drawn from the Act must supplement not supplant current state funding for programs targeted in the plan.

The group recessed for lunch. The luncheon speaker was Maura Wolfe, of the Point of Light Foundation. She provided an overview of the Foundation's activities and introduced the Youth Ambassador program.

The Points of Light Foundation efforts to promote and encourage volunteerism across the generations include:

- National advertising campaigns.
- Coordinating and mobilizing existing resources including corporate leaders to promote volunteerism.
- Identifying effective programs disseminating information about them.

One of the administrative divisions at the Foundation is called Youth Engaged in Service (YES). YES is about to launch a major new program to promote youth service, the YES Youth Ambassadors. The program will be piloted for one year in three states beginning in September 1991. Michigan is being considered as one of the three states. Below is a summary of the program.

- The goals are to connect people, build coalitions, and share information at state, regional and national levels.
- Two young people will be serve as full-time state liaison/organizers for the Foundation.
- They will be assigned to work for a lead state agency/organization, such as the Governor's new commission.
- They will host a minimum of two Points of Light Action Forums to inform state groups about youth service.
- They will actively work to involve youth in service.
- They will help to organize a data bank of services and resources.
- They will be trained by Points of Light in Washington.
- They need to be on the job by September.

Develop incentives and rewards for local collaboration.

Volunteer Action Centers can play important roles by serving as information clearinghouses, providing student mini-grant, and coordinating new project development.

Funding must flow directly to local levels.

Require collaboration in mini-grant requests at the local level.

Consider developing a competitive grant process.

Guidelines need to be shared on principles of good practice with the service organizations.

Make volunteerism more accessible for "at risk" youth and families.

Set up mechanisms for local communities to solve problems on their own.

Ensure that people from the grass-roots can contribute to the planning process. Ensure that students, teachers, and agencies can contribute.

Create a state service and conservation corps advisory committee.

Creatively use and involve the 4-H and community college systems.

Look at the strengths and weakness of the Minnesota model.

Learn what happened with the state volunteer clearinghouse under Gov. Miliken.

Develop a centralized data system with direct local access and satellite local data systems.

Create incentives that emphasize the value and importance of service and volunteerism.

Teach volunteers to develop a volunteer portfolio of experiences.

Include corporations as a strategy for long term planning.

K-12/corps/service relationships.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

Use the resources of groups like those represented in this room to survey young people across the state on how grant request should be structured and use those responses in the application.

Establish local community panels that include youth to assess local projects and service opportunities.

Train organizations in the development and implementation of volunteer programs to make them "volunteer friendly". Need to be "youth friendly".

Involve Youth at-risk

-inter-organizational youth collaboration

At the state level the following could be possible:

- clearinghouse of collaborative projects
- training of community educators and agencies
- linking community projects with schools (corps/schools connected)
- model job descriptions
- record keeping/evaluation of programs

Need for intergenerational programming

Incentives:

- Scholarships
- Work

The group was left with the following tasks for the next meeting.

- Review the draft report from June 10 and 11.
- Review minutes of July 15.
- Review the Act summary.
- Come to the next meeting prepared to answer the following questions:
 - What principles should guide the state commission's planning?
 - What should be the measurable outcomes?
 - What should be the organizational structure of the state commission?
 - What resources could your organization contribute to the initiative?

- Long term effect.
- Diversity of participants and agencies, and services provided.
- Leadership roles taken by youth.
- Extent of business partnerships.
- Retention of youth in programs.
- Sustainability of programs.
- Level of youth involvement in program planning and decision-making
- The structure, intent, and practice of youth advisory councils.
- The level and quality of local community agency support.

What should be the commission's development plan and the process for fund distribution?

- Grant applications should demonstrate- the buy-in of local partners, youth involvement in planning process, and should include expected outcomes, an operating plan, and a monitoring system. The grant review process should be inclusive and measure against the items above.
- Use funding to support the formation of a program development infrastructure. Match existing resources. Local programs should be responsible for sustainability.
- Support regional clearinghouses that promote the development of local coalitions and provide technical assistance and support that:
 - trains youth for service opportunities.
 - trains agencies to provide quality service experiences.
 - trains coalitions to raise funds to become self-supporting.
- Utilize existing networks. Do not create a new bureaucracy.
- The Governor's Commission should determine the criteria for grant proposals and selection. The Governor Romney, Janet Blanchard, Michelle Engler co-chaired Coordinating Committee on Voluntarism should have an equal role in selecting local grantees. Local grantees should demonstrate the implementation of a local inter-agency committee on youth initiatives and the role of young people in the design and implementation of the local program.

What are resources your organization or network will contribute towards the success of the Michigan youth service plan?

Staff Expertise in:

Program development
 Statewide program implementation and operation
 Administration
 Sub-granting
 Experience with past and present highly successful programs
 Information dissemination
 Access to student volunteers
 Limited Staff Support
 Expertise on and access to resource materials

OUTCOMES

There is very little research on the effect of service on youth development. Building a research base for youth service should be integrated into the plan. Research will help advance the initiative and guide new program development.

Head Start research has influenced policy development.

A sampling of suggested measures:

- Continued volunteer service.
- Service impact on the community.
- Attitude changes among youth servers and community members.
- Leadership roles taken by youth servers.
- Level of community agency involvement.

Measures must look at the effect on servers and the community served.

Use research to educate funding sources and win their support.

Consider a "human service unit" formula, for instance, how many older Americans are served.

Consider measures for the type of service provided.

Enlist an independent evaluator to assess state-wide initiative. Establish an easy, yet uniform, reporting mechanism in order to build a comprehensive database. Link this to the independent evaluator.

Include service benefits for youth: employability, group process skills, education goals.

Link to national education goals.

Research should not drive projects.

Overall outcomes: community awareness, willingness to continue project, increased local funds for youth service programs.

RESOURCES TO BE SHARED

Council of Michigan Foundations - Community and funding resource information and training.

Department of Education - Information on successful school-based programs

Michigan Campus Compact - Information on successful college programs, experience in making service mini-grants.

Detroit Compact - Training.

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