

# Volunteering at the San Francisco Zoo



Prepared By: Wilson Wong  
Date: December 4, 2007

PA 745: Administration of Non-Profits

## Executive Summary



The purpose of the San Francisco Zoo is that it “connects people with wildlife, inspires caring for nature and advances conservation action.” The zoo’s origins began more than 72 years ago with Herbert Fleishhacker, focusing on scientifically sound wildlife management and maintaining meticulous, well-run exhibits that closely mimicked animals’ natural environments. The founding of the Zoological Society furthered the zoo’s mission to advance conservation action, becoming a powerful fundraising source and eventually overseeing management and operations of the zoo.

The Zoological Society is poised to rejuvenate the SF Zoo, having funded important projects in the past and ensuring it maintains its commitment to conservation, education, and research—from creating naturalistic habitats without bars to developing sophisticated breeding program. Today’s “New Zoo” excels by providing quality animal care, wildlife conservation and education, and connecting people with animals, the zoo affirms its underlying belief that interaction and activity lead to conservation action. The New Zoo seeks to transform itself as a conservation zoo, becoming a mission-driven organization and hoping that caring for “specific animals will inspire people to care for all wildlife and that this is the first step in the journey to becoming a conservationist.”

*The SF Zoo “connects people with wildlife, inspires caring for nature and advances conservation action.”*  
-San Francisco Zoo

Community participation has become a contemporary adjunct to the New Zoo’s new mission, encouraging volunteerism and local community involvement. It is the Zoo’s hope that direct activism and connection with nature and animals will increase

community commitment to support the Zoo itself and wildlife conservation efforts. To this date, the volunteer program remains fettered with no central management or support to foster and sustain volunteers. As a result, volunteerism has reached an all-time low at the zoo. To bolster active participation, the Zoo needs a means to consolidate volunteer administration, a strategic volunteer recruitment plan, and redevelopment of impactful volunteer opportunities to provide meaningful experiences and engage the public.

The SF Zoo has the potential to provide exciting opportunities for urbanites to engage nature and wildlife in a unique, up-close and personal way. Yet, the Zoo also gains additional labor, talent, and skills—valuable resources for any non-profit that can effectively manage and utilize them. It becomes a win-win situation for the community and the Zoo.

## **Market Analysis**

The Education Department serves an integral function of the New Zoo's renewed conservationist efforts, connecting people to wildlife through educational activities. This department is responsible for offering interactive experiences with wildlife, from curriculum services for teachers and students to educational conservation opportunities for teens and adults alike. Volunteerism is an essential aspect, which facilitates wildlife education through action. Especially within the context of an urban social environment where the general population has limited access to nature and wildlife, soliciting public assistance to participate in volunteer opportunities engages the community and furthers the Zoo's public education and conservation efforts. Furthermore, enlisting an extra

“set of hands” provides valuable resources to support administrative and zoo keeping duties and invests volunteers to become potential donors.

### ***Volunteering at the New Zoo— Today’s Status***

The Education department is currently responsible for managing and overseeing all volunteer opportunities at the SF Zoo, yet employs a sporadic and unfocused approach towards volunteerism. The Zoo as a whole values volunteers, holding annual volunteer appreciation events to recognize volunteer efforts and readily acknowledging volunteers as the “public face” representatives in the Zoo’s print materials. However, volunteer retention and new volunteer recruitment has been at an all time low, primarily due to a lack of concerted effort to drive and manage the volunteer program. One Specialist from the Education department has undertaken the secondary role of supervising over 300 volunteers at the Zoo. Overwhelmed with her principal duties, the Specialist has little discretionary time to lead recruitment efforts or time to develop a strategic plan that more effectively incorporates volunteers in the New Zoo’s mission. Furthermore, the Zoo’s Board also believes that current volunteers’ skills, abilities, and time are underutilized and the current volunteer program do not respond to nor balance the voluntary sector’s desires with the Zoo’s needs.

Volunteers have a choice of opportunities in two sub-programs: “*Adult Volunteers*” and “*Teen Volunteers*”. Each program targets age-specific group of volunteers and is flexible enough to accommodate and place volunteers with specialized skills or expressed desires, but



*Figure 1-Teens Staffing an Animal Care Station*

emphasizes direct interactions with the Zoo animals. The Teen Volunteers offer disparate summer and year-round programs, primarily training youth volunteers to work directly with animals as animal handlers. These animal handlers reciprocally educate Zoo patrons through public demonstrations at the Zoo. The Adult Volunteers Program has the capacity to place volunteers in direct service roles as Zoo docents or in indirect administrative placements, such as working on office administrative projects, fund-raising activities, assisting with special events, or handling membership drives.

### ***Need for Volunteers—Why Does the SF Zoo Need Help?***

The New Zoo's new mission emphasizes interactive impacts on nature conservation to have positive affect on wildlife and the environment. As a non-profit, the Zoo has limited funding and utilizes volunteers as an in-kind resource, one that provides necessary skills, labor, and expertise to further mission of nature conservation to protect animals and the environment. More than 3,000 volunteers at Canada's Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Center helped launch a restoration campaign to restore the local shorelines (Cohn, 2000). Aquarium and community volunteers cleaned up the shores, replanted native flora, and placed log booms in waters to protect near-shore aquatic habitats. Volunteers are necessary to help cash-strapped organizations fulfill labor-intensive activities.

Furthermore, investing community members to be actively engaged in an organization can lead volunteers to become potential donors. Civic participation forms a framework for an individual to develop affinity and commitment towards an organization's mission and goal, and invest their time as well as their money. Swanagan stated two behaviors that indicate a strong commitment to zoo's

conservation efforts in particular, are visitors' willingness to (a) make financial contributions and (b) write letters to legislators (Swanagan, 2000).

### ***Trends in Nature Conservation***

Opponents of traditional zoos have long described zoos at worse as captive collections of animals for display; at best, zoos are a conservative effort to preserve species of animals (Tribe, 2003). An increasing awareness and acknowledgement that endangered animals are rapidly continuing to disappear underscore the necessity for environmental organizations to intervene. As McAllison asserts, the World Zoo Conservation Strategy calls upon zoos, who currently purport to bear conservation efforts, to become actively involved with

new conservation efforts in situ (in the wild) and ex situ (in the zoo) through habitat restoration, reintroduction and

*Every zoo "realizes that its mission is to conserve wildlife and natural habitats through changing the attitudes of its visitors".*

*-Norton, Hutchins, Stevens, & Maple, 1995*

supplementation of endangered animals, genetic management, captive breeding, education, and research (McAllison, 2003). Such efforts reflect many zoos' changing role, attitude and contribution as social institutions in wildlife management and environmental issues. Every zoo "realizes that its mission is to conserve wildlife and natural habitats through changing the attitudes of its visitors" (Norton et. al., 1995).

An interactive nature education effort in particular has begun to supplant or supplement current zoo conservation efforts, which typically include a visitor observing animals and reading literature. Current informal education venues are considered ineffective towards increasing actual awareness and civic participation amongst visitors—the desire is to engage zoo patrons beyond being a passive “viewer” and

becoming a direct contributor to conservation. Prior knowledge may be one factor affecting a visitor's interest levels and while Derwin et. al. (as cited by Swanagan, 2000) showed some visitors may report increased interest in conservation after visiting passive exhibits, Doering suggested that an exhibit can retain value in reinforcing awareness in individuals regardless of prior exposure to a topic. In a study by Kellert et. al., researchers looked at the impact of informal education, as indicators of conservation, on shifts in factual knowledge, basic attitudes, ethical concerns, and conservation awareness (Kellert et. al., 1989). They "failed to observe [in visitors] any appreciable increase in either factual or conceptual knowledge of animals.

Learning, when observed, was largely restricted to basic issues of animal appearance or behavior, with little in the way of enhanced knowledge or interest in [further] wildlife conservation". The researchers identified a key challenge to active engagement is the brief and limited exposure to information, in some cases lasting only a few seconds. Abundant and rich stimuli, including animal behaviors and social interactions with other patrons, further detract from the overall ecological and conservation messages of zoo exhibits. Learning in the informal setting thus becomes more "attitudinal than cognitive", diminishing the potential learning impact of concrete experiences that may be more valuable for long-term value retention. Lutz et. al. found interactive teaching methods to be affective on learning and demonstrated higher engagement learning and deeper reflective understanding (Lutz et. al., 2006). Exceedingly engaged individuals showed greater motivation and enthusiasm in learning, compared to compliant individuals exposed to a single mode of instruction.

Affective teaching methods emphasize a need to improve patron engagement in zoo activities and exhibits.

Because of these ineffectual informal education avenues, conservation zoos are improving their education focus through recreation and activism. Learning through active participation in wildlife management efforts brings zoo patrons closer and more involved in nature issues. Often, providing visitors a chance to have an immediate impact or a personal connection with ex situ wildlife conservation invests the patron in deeper activism. Exhibits providing knowledge-based information are more recently transforming into focused exhibits on conservation issues that the public is encouraged to support through donations, wise consumerism, and legislative support. Swanagan suggested that with Atlanta Zoo visitors who had interactive experience with the zoo's elephant demonstration and bio-fact program, would be more likely to actively support elephant conservation than those who simply viewed the animals in their exhibit and read graphics (Swanagan, 2000). Active patrons who experienced the interactive exhibits in different contexts were more likely to express interest in supporting future conservation efforts.



*Figure 2- Lemur*

One zoo effectively demonstrates the value of providing personal connecting experiences for visitors. Lindemann-Matthies & Kamer examined the effect of small exhibit “touch-tables” presented by zoo professionals or volunteers on visitors’ learning (Lindemann-Matthies & Kamer, 2006). Results revealed that visitors using the touch

table “knew more about the biology, ecology, and conservation of bearded vultures, both immediately after their visit to the zoo and two months later”. Such highly personal exhibits and settings in nature education can dramatically advance education efforts to engage the public. Additionally, the study showed volunteers are equally as effective as professionals in providing equivalent interactive educational experiences.

### ***Trends in Volunteerism***

Volunteer involvement can be an invaluable component of any non-profit organization’s program. Non-profits can be heavily reliant of volunteer resources to aid their mission and goals. Effective volunteer management is a necessary tool to maximize volunteer capacity and balance volunteers’ requests with the organization’s needs. Furthermore, investing volunteers in non-profits can be a time-consuming processing and a strategic approach should be taken to balance the risks and rewards of volunteer efforts. An effective multi-prong management strategy handles both advantages and disadvantages

through 1) concise and targeted recruitment efforts and 2) providing value-added volunteer opportunities, 3) solid volunteer oversight and 4) continued volunteer retention.

*Are you making a concerted effort to seek out and attract those volunteers who can really add value to your cause? Do you place as much emphasis on recruiting volunteers for the long-term as you do when hiring employees? [The] answers to all of these questions should be a resounding "YES".*  
-Walker, 2001

Increasingly, many non-profits have begun applying market-oriented approach towards recruitment and retention of volunteers, applying core concepts such as customer satisfaction and target marketing in an increasingly saturated market where the non-profit sector is seeing competitive pressure to recruit volunteers. Attracting and

retaining the best volunteers is labor and time-intensive—effective recruitment requires a strategic approach, thoughtful planning, and the ability to capitalize on the strengths, skills and experience of the most committed volunteers (Walker, 2001).

Furthermore, budget-conscious organizations need to make a cost-effective and concerted effort to appeal to volunteers who can “genuinely add value to an organization’s cause” (Callow, 2004). Target-marketing specific volunteer sub-groups allow an organization to appeal to individual market desires, improving recruitment efforts and increasing numbers of potential volunteers. Often, as Bussell and Forbes assert, it is simply a matter of outreaching to people who have never been asked to volunteer—they maintain “people are more than four times as likely to volunteer when asked than when they are not” (Bussell & Forbes, 2002). Volunteering is a “value-expressive” function, which allows individuals to act their own underlying values and beliefs. Organizations that can modify their volunteer positions to consider these values will be more effective in attracting a variety of volunteer market segments and boost recruitment efficiency. For example, non-profits can give single people the chance to volunteer with a group of other singles or encourage families to volunteer together or allow families to volunteer together (Ellis, 2005).

Trends in volunteer management include volunteer job design and risk management that ensures the organization can place the right volunteer in the appropriate activity (Lozano, 2005). Providing value-added volunteer opportunities engages volunteers through multiple

*“[Volunteers] are more willing to complete all sorts of tasks if they enjoy what they are doing and the people they are doing it with.”*  
-Ellis, 2005

facets and enhances efficient usage of volunteer time. For example, today's volunteers prefer multitasking opportunities and being able to participate in volunteering as a leisure-time activity, while also filling the priority demands of a job or family, can boost a volunteer's enjoyment (Ellis, 2005). As Ellis contends, by allowing families or groups to volunteer together, they are more "willing to complete all sorts of tasks if they enjoy what they are doing and the people they are doing it with". Providing one-day and short-term volunteer assignments allows another segment of volunteers to participate as well. Employer-supported volunteerism is enabling employees to donate their volunteer time and talents, while providing additional value to the companies as well. Increasingly, businesses are helping employees to volunteer by allowing them to modify their work hours in order to take part in volunteer activity and encouraging non-profits to promote volunteer opportunities through "brown-bag" lunches, service fairs or presentations. (Lozano, 2005).



While volunteering is key to improving the zoo’s mission, Forsyth emphasizes the necessity of balancing the risk imposed upon service recipients and volunteer positions

HOW TO INTEGRATE VOLUNTEER-MANAGEMENT ELEMENTS WITH LAYERS-OF-NECESSITY APPROACH					
Layer of Necessity	Assessment of Needs	Recruitment	Risk Management Audit, Interviewing, and Screening	Orientation, Training and Monitoring	Retention and Recognition
# 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ identification of tasks and number of volunteers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ target groups of people</li> <li>◆ mass promotion and advertising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ risk management audit</li> <li>◆ phone interview</li> <li>◆ minimal screening</li> <li>◆ direct referral</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ task specific training “on the job”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ names entered into database for future events</li> <li>◆ admission to event</li> <li>◆ letter of thanks</li> </ul>
# 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ identification of skills is required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ more specialized recruitment needed</li> <li>◆ methods may include mass promotion and targeted recruitment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ risk management audit</li> <li>◆ face to face interview optional</li> <li>◆ screening as determined by nature of volunteer position</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ short orientation</li> <li>◆ task specific training</li> <li>◆ ongoing training as required</li> <li>◆ spot checks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ ongoing supervision</li> <li>◆ verbal recognition</li> <li>◆ public recognition</li> <li>◆ annual recognition</li> </ul>
# 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ identification of skills, qualifications, and specific tasks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ very specialized targeted recruitment</li> <li>◆ presentations to potential groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ risk management audit</li> <li>◆ face to face interview</li> <li>◆ extensive screening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ position specific orientation and training prior to volunteer assignment</li> <li>◆ ongoing supervision, training, and evaluation</li> <li>◆ spot checks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ identification of motivations and planning</li> <li>◆ determine most effective methods</li> <li>◆ public &amp; annual recognition</li> </ul>

Figure 3-Effective Volunteer Management-Balancing Necessity vs. Risk (Forsyth, 1999)

and identifies 5 key elements to effectively manage the risks: assessment of needs, recruitment, risk management (auditing and screening), orientation / training and monitoring, and retention and recognition (Forsyth, 1999). The degree and level of oversight varies accordingly, based on the vulnerability and risk involved—greater risks incur increased management of supervision of volunteers. Understanding the implications involved aids an organization to strategically manage its volunteers.

Improving retention is a steady trend in volunteer management and by retaining volunteers year-to-year, organizations adds longitudinal value and reduce recruitment and training costs. Adoption of key volunteer management practices (such as maintaining high quality connections with volunteers, upholding an elevated level of professionalism, and staying organized) can help organizations enhance volunteer retention and help maintain an organizational environment supportive of volunteerism. Volunteer turnover is an organizational disruption, which can dampen the ability to serve clients and reduces program service efficacy (Hager, M. & Brudney, J., 2004). Non-profits should focus on preventing volunteer turnover and a supportive infrastructure that endorses volunteer involvement encourages volunteers to return and continue their investment in the non-profit. As Hager and Brudney contend, by allocating sufficient funds to support volunteer involvement, cultivating a welcoming organizational climate, providing value opportunities and experiences, and enlisting volunteers to recruit other volunteers, organizations invest in an “infrastructure, culture, and volunteer experience that will keep volunteers coming back” (Hager, M. & Brudney, J., 2004).



## **Next Steps—Strategic Recruitment Plan & Coordinator**

The SF Zoo recognizes the importance of volunteerism at the zoo as a key component towards implementing its new mission, educating and promoting environmental advocacy in the community. However, the Zoo currently does not have

the capacity to manage or even recruit new volunteers; the Zoo can employ two basic strategies to correct these deficiencies: develop and implement a strategic recruitment plan and hire a volunteer coordinator. A strategic recruitment plan allows the organization to approach potential recruitment sources via systematic market-based techniques that improve the organization's efficient use of time and resources.

Furthermore, a dedicated volunteer coordinator can focus and centralize recruitment efforts, while supervising and coordinating volunteers currently at the zoo.

### ***Program—Organization and Management***

To realize the full potential of the volunteer program, a full-time volunteer coordinator should be hired. The volunteer coordinator will be responsible for all aspects of managing, supervising, and recruiting volunteers (See Appendix A for further details). The Education Director, who oversees community education programs and interactive learning exhibits, will directly supervise the volunteer coordinator and have oversight over incorporation of volunteers with Zoo programs. Centralized and clearly



defined roles facilitate volunteer coordination, while funneling volunteers through a principal agent decreases ambiguity of volunteer roles and responsibilities (Forsyth, 1999). The coordinator should be the primary contact for all volunteers, from the initial recruitment connection to the placement and finally to termination of the volunteer's term, creating continuity for the volunteer and the organization.

Oft times as an undervalued field, the province of volunteer management is increasingly becoming more professionalized and structured, requiring specialized qualities, knowledge, and skills. Staff support in the form of a volunteer coordinator is an important component to increase volunteer management capacity (Hager & Brudney, 2004). In spite of non-profit employees needing to be a “jack-of-all-trades”, volunteer coordinators have continuous personal contact with volunteers and thus need to possess personable skills, including great interpersonal and intrapersonal communication, flexibility, ability to train others, public speaking, and multi-tasking. In addition, many organizations frequently track volunteer-related statistics (number of hours donated, retention rates, etc.), which require a person comfortable with statistics and numbers (see **Table 1-Key Qualifications for a Volunteer Coordinator** for listing of desirable qualifications). Finally, since many non-profit organizations realistically do not

**Table 1-Key Qualifications for a Volunteer Coordinator**

<b><u>Qualities</u></b>	<b><u>Knowledge</u></b>	<b><u>Abilities / Skills</u></b>
• Passionate	• Training strategies and / or teaching experience	• Multi-task
• Desire to help others	• Scheduling / coordination	• Communicate effectively (inter- & intra-personal)
• Creativity	• Recruitment strategies	• Strong affective writing
• Objectivity	• Conflict resolution strategies	• Strong public speaking
• Honest / integrity	• Event planning	• Ability to give effective presentations
• Interest in environmental issues	• Knowledge of animals / environment	• Supervise and coordinate volunteers
	• Basic computer / internet applications	

pay commensurate private market salaries, a person seeking employment with usually do so for intangible benefits other than wages, such as being passionate about the

cause, having a strong desire to assist others, and seeking opportunities for increased job and role flexibility. These innate qualities can be difficult to ascertain and are “grey-area” qualifiers of an individual’s ability to accomplish their job, but are crucial considerations for organizations to allocate their resources and time efficiently.

The strategic volunteer recruitment plan facilitates the volunteer coordinator’s role in not only recruiting new volunteers, but also positioning and retaining volunteers. The plan should be developed with the Zoo’s principal mission, needs, and desires in mind, including the desire to educate the broader community, diversify its pool of volunteers, decrease turnover, decrease “downtime” when there are no volunteers, and outreaching to under-marketed communities. An effective plan should address these issues thoughtfully, planning for varying contingencies, and thus make deliberate and tactical choices. A strategic plan allows effective management of the coordinator’s time, in addition to focusing on key volunteer market segments with specific promotion and advertising techniques tailored to each community’s needs unique qualities. The Chinese community in the Sunset District of San Francisco, for example, is an under-tapped community that the Zoo would particularly like to target.

Principal agents, including management, Board members, and current volunteers should participate in the initial preparation and planning stages to ensure thorough coverage of the plan’s elements, however, a basic plan should include research, in-depth market-analysis of potential volunteer pools, establishment of outreach routines and annual goals (see **Table 2-Strategic Volunteer Recruitment Plan Elements** for highlights of desirable elements). Upon hire, one of the volunteer coordinator’s first goals should be a systematic examination of desirable volunteer qualities and

establishment of a “rubric” to facilitate determination of good volunteer. The utility of a grading “rubric” is evident in targeting specific volunteers who will provide the best value to an organization and sets an objective scale to rate a volunteer’s performance—all of which facilitate retention (by seeking out truly invested volunteers) and effective resource use.

**Table 2-Strategic Volunteer Recruitment Plan Elements**

- Identify essential and/or desirable volunteer qualities and requirements
- Identify key market segments of potential volunteers
- Identify community organizations to develop partnerships
- Identify avenues of outreach
- Establish / create a screening process
- Establish timeline
- Establish monthly and yearly goals
- Establish a basic volunteer training program

The process of developing a good volunteer program, from hiring a volunteer coordinator and developing a good strategic plan is fluid, but the initial creation of plan the document should take anywhere from 1-2 weeks, while the zoo should allot 1-2 months for hiring and training a qualified coordinator. Afterwards, semi-annual review of the strategic plan helps the organization to adjust and modify the plan to suit changing market conditions and organizational desires.

***Financial Resources***

The proposed budget for implementation of the proposed program is an annual estimate of costs, including the cost of hiring a volunteer coordinator and implementation of the recruitment plan, such as printing of public relation materials and promotional supplies (see **Table 3-Proposed Budget to Hire Volunteer Coordinator and Implement Recruitment Plan** for further budget details). These are liberal estimates and

assume the organization is willing to invest in high-quality recruitment and marketing strategies, such as doling out promotional pens or disseminating flyers to local libraries.

The fiscal costs of implementing the proposed program are an extension of existing volunteerism efforts at the zoo. Currently, the zoo apportions funds for an annual volunteer recognition, marginal promotional materials, and partial cost of the Education Specialist’s time for volunteer management. Annual fund allocation for the volunteer program is approximately \$8,000 to \$10,000. Current budgetary restrictions limit the Zoo to utilize its general fund resources to support the volunteer program, which has already set monies aside for hiring a dedicated volunteer coordinator. However, further dollars must be allocated, either from general funds and apportioned from future donor sources. One potential revenue stream is active volunteers at the zoo—sending an annual appeal letter is cost effective and may generate some funds.

**Table 3-Proposed Budget to Hire Volunteer Coordinator and Implement Recruitment Plan**

Volunteer Coordinator Salary & Benefits	\$60,000
Outreach / Promotional Costs (Costs of fairs, subscription fees, etc.)	\$1,000
Recruitment Materials (Brochures, flyers, etc.)	\$7,500
Transportation	\$500
Volunteer Recognition Event	\$7,000
Promotion Materials (branded pens, t-shirts, etc.)	\$5,000
Total	\$81, 000

***Performance—Measuring Goals and Outcomes***

Performance measures are helpful in an overall management strategy to “evaluate, control, budget, motivate, promote, celebrate, learn, and improve” organizational performance and promote accountability to show outcome-based results (Behn, 2003). Accountability is a valuable tool for discouraging corruption and

malfeasance, but is also beneficial for a program to accurately measure and report program improvements to stakeholders (Osborne, 2004). Buckmaster affirms outcome-related goals as achievable and appropriate yardsticks, which define a framework for measurements—the benefits or changes achieved through a program or an assessment of the results (Buckmaster, 1999). Quantitative and qualitative data collected through surveys, assessments and other means are essential measurement instruments, which in spite of being subjective provide a comprehensive overview of program success when linked to clearly stated goals and objectives.

Delineated performance measures following mission-based goals are meaningful tools in reporting success and achievement of an organization’s stated mission. In context of the SF Zoo’s volunteer program, the primary goals are to increase number of new recruited volunteers for each market segment and increase number of volunteers of returning (retained) volunteers. Actual quantifiable outcomes can include the following:

**Table 4—Measurable Performance Outcomes**

- Recruited volunteers
  - Adult Volunteers
  - Teen Volunteers
- Trained
  - # of all trained volunteers
- Active
  - # of all trained volunteers that become active
- Retained volunteers
  - 60%
- # of volunteers recruited per market segment

## **Conclusion**

The New SF Zoo is dedicated towards direct activism and educating the public to inspire conservation. To achieve this goal, the New Zoo emphasizes local volunteerism

and community involvement to increase community commitment and support of the Zoo itself and its wildlife conservation efforts. A lack of central management or a cohesive recruitment strategy results in a diminished volunteer investment and retention, and volunteerism has reached an all-time low at the zoo. Adoption of a strategic volunteer recruitment plan and hiring of a dedicated volunteer coordinator can bolster the Zoo's flagging volunteer program. Consolidating volunteer administration through a volunteer coordinator facilitates adoption of good volunteer management practices and strategies, which engages and invests volunteers in an organization's mission. The coordinator can also implement market-based strategies for recruitment and provide volunteer opportunities to provide meaningful experiences and engage the public. The SF Zoo has the potential to provide exciting opportunities for San Francisco urbanites to engage nature and wildlife in a unique, up-close and personal way. Yet, the Zoo also gains additional labor, talent, and skills—valuable resources for any non-profit that can effectively manage and utilize them. It becomes a win-win situation for the community and the Zoo.

## References

- Behn, R. (2003). Why Measure Performance? Different Purposes Require Different Measures. *Public Administration Review*, 63(5), 586—606.
- Buckmaster, N. (1999). Associations Between Outcome Measurement, Accountability And Learning For Non-Profit Organizations. *The International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 12(20), 186—200.
- Bussell, H. & Forbes, D. (2002). Understanding The Volunteer Market: The What, Where, Who And Why Of Volunteering. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, 7(3), 244—58.
- Callow, M. (2004). Identifying Promotional Appeals For Targeting Potential Volunteers: An Exploratory Study On Volunteering Motives Among Retirees. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, 9(3), 261—275.
- Cohn, J.P. (2000). Working Outside the Box. *Bioscience*, 50(7), 564—570.
- Dunlap, J., & Kellert, S. R. (1989). Informal Learning At The Zoo: A Study Of Attitude And Knowledge Impacts (A report to the Zoological Society of Philadelphia of a study funded by the G. R. Dodge Foundation).
- Ellis, S. (1999). Update on Volunteer Trends. *Nonprofit World*, 17(6), 47—48.
- Ellis, S. (2005). Tracking Volunteer Trends. *Association Management*, 57(1), 72—75.
- Forsyth, J. (1999). Volunteer Management Strategies: Balancing Risk & Reward. *Nonprofit World*, 17(3), 40—43.
- Hager, M. & Brudney, J. (2004). Volunteer Management: Practices and Retention of Volunteers, The Urban Institute
- Johnson-Pynn, J.S. & Johnson, L.R. (2005). Successes and Challenges in East African Conservation Education. *Journal of Environmental Education*, 36(2), 25—39.
- Lindemann-Matthies, P. & Kamer, T. (2006). The Influence of an Interactive Educational Approach on Visitors' Learning in a Swiss Zoo. *Science Education*, 90(2), 296—315.
- Lozano, G. (2005). Volunteerism and the Professional. *The Canadian Appraiser*, 49(3), 12—17.
- Lutz, S., Guthrie, J.T., & Davis, M.H. (2006). Scaffolding for Engagement in Elementary School Education. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 100(1), 1—20.
- Mallinson, J.C. (2003). A Sustainable Future for Zoos and Their Role in Wildlife Conservation, *Human Dimensions of Wildlife*, 8, 59—63.
- Norton, B. G., Hutchins, M., Stevens, E. F., & Maple, T. L. (1995). Ethics On The Ark. *Smithsonian*, 219, p. 219.
- Swanagan, J.S. (2000). Factors Influencing Zoo Visitors' Conservation Attitudes and Behavior. *Journal of Environmental Education*, 31(4), 26—32.
- Tribe, A. & Rosemary, B. (2003). Assessing the Role of Zoos in Wildlife Conservation, *Human Dimensions of Wildlife*, 8, 65—74.
- Walker, F. (2001). Volunteerism Under The Magnifying Glass. *Fund Raising Management*, 32(4), 46—49.
- Wymer, W.W. (2003). Differentiating Literacy Volunteers: A Segmentation Analysis For Target Marketing. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, 8(3), 267—286.

## Appendix A.

### VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR POSITION

**SUMMARY:** Manages and develops the education outreach and volunteer programs for the San Francisco Zoo and ensures that the programs advance the Zoo mission.

**ESSENTIAL DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:** include the following. Other duties may be assigned.

1. Set goals and objectives for volunteer programs and ensures that they are met. Evaluates overall program and takes action as necessary to best advance Zoo mission.
2. Recruits, interviews, and classifies applicants for volunteer work; informs volunteers of policies, procedures, and standards of volunteer service.
3. Recruits & assigns volunteers for Zoo special events.
4. Consults with and advises Zoo staff developing new volunteer projects.
5. Confers with volunteers to resolve problems and to promote cooperation and interest.
6. Maintains records of volunteer service; organizes the annual volunteer recognition event.
7. Coordinate and schedule volunteers; place volunteers in appropriate positions.
8. Promotes opportunities at the Zoo to local schools and community centers.
9. Sets outreach goals and objectives for teen and adult volunteer program and ensures that they are met. Evaluates overall program and takes action as necessary to best advance Zoo mission.
10. Outreach and conduct volunteer recruitment with community partners.
11. Develops and assists with teacher training workshops.
12. Promotes Outreach programs (ZooMobile, Biodiversity Basics) to local schools and works to include underrepresented schools in the program.
13. Oversees and supports administration of programs, including scheduling, confirmations, billings, processing program income and maintaining and reporting program statistics.
14. Interacts with Zoo visitors courteously and offers proper attention at all times.

## Appendix B.

### Detailed Elements of Strategic Volunteer Recruitment Plan

- Identify essential and/or desirable volunteer qualities and requirements
  - Create a “rubric” to determine volunteer fit and desirable qualities
    - Time commitment
    - Skills—ability to communicate to groups, handle animals
    - Values—have a belief in animal rights
- Identify key market segments of potential volunteers
  - Families
  - Singles
- Identify community organizations to develop partnerships
  - High Schools / colleges
  - Mother’s Clubs
  - Churches
  - Environmental / conservation organizations
  - Corporations (including current corporate donors)
- Identify avenues of outreach
  - Internet (volunteer match, Craigslist, website, etc.)
  - Affiliates or sponsors (asking current donors to spread word of need)
  - Print materials (flyers / brochures at partner locations)
  - Service fairs / farmers market
  - Word-of-mouth (through patrons)
  - Brown-bag lunches or presentations
- Establish / create a screening process
  - Potential screening questions—using volunteer “rubric”
  - Establish grounds for termination
- Establish timeline
  - Keep constant flow of volunteers by outreaching and making volunteer appeals at key times
- Establish monthly and annual recruitment goals
- Establish a basic volunteer training program (Gathering training material packets, creating training presentations, process, etc.)