

President's Update - March 12, 2015

The Value of Volunteering

As library professionals volunteering is close to our hearts. When you work in a library so much of your work is helping people. As I've worked in libraries I've found that it makes me feel good to help people with things that I understand how to find, solve, or create. Frequently patrons are overjoyed when I've helped them solve an information need or brought them a useful program or service. When I volunteer I get the same feeling. It's fun to help people and organizations.

We all volunteer for different reasons though:

- The opportunity to meet new people and expand your personal or professional network
- Getting involved to give back to a community, organization or profession that has benefited you personally
- Gain experience or acquire new skills
- A desire to contribute your accumulated expertise to help others or give back to your community

No matter your reason to volunteer, please understand that the giving of your time is greatly appreciated. Many organizations would not exist without a dedicated group of volunteers. In 2013, one in four adults (25.4 percent) volunteered through an organization. Altogether, 62.6 million Americans volunteers nearly 7.7 billion hours. Based on the Independent Sector's estimate of the average value of a volunteer hour - \$22.55 in 2013 – the estimated value of this volunteer service is more than \$173 billion. No one can replace your time and for you to give it to any organization is wonderful.

MLA issues an annual Call for Volunteers that creates numerous opportunities for Michigan library professionals to develop leadership skills, create professional development opportunities and facilitate networking and sharing of best practices. It also plays a vital role in furthering the work of the Association and benefiting libraries throughout the state.

The Call for Volunteers this year includes expanded opportunities to better meet member needs and preferences. In addition to traditional standing committees and work groups, members will find more task-related and short-term, "micro" volunteer prospects. Roles have been redefined to better manage expectations and new opportunities to supply member-driven communications

have been created. For any member who wants to get involved with MLA, we have a place.

The Call for Volunteers will kick off on Monday, March 23 and remain open through Wednesday, April 15. Please consider lending your time and talents to MLA. Let's create something bigger and better together for the Michigan library community.

Make it an outstanding day!

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