Volunteers

Idaho is an incredible state - there is no shortage of dedicated, passionate people willing to go into our prison facilities and volunteer! Today, we have **1,669 volunteers** that have provided **38,014 hours** in 2017! That’s up from 1,346 volunteers and 32,683 hours in 2016. More than half of those volunteers (59%) come into our facilities on a regular basis to provide services. These services range from religious services and classes to secular education or vocation classes.

According to the Independent Sector, the estimated value of volunteer time in 2016 is $24.14 per hour. With 38,014 hours of service provided statewide, that’s $917,660 this year alone!

Types of Services

*This includes services that did not fit in well with other categories, i.e. New Age, Odinist, and Temple of Light.*

Donations

Volunteers across the state donate items to our facilities. These donations include items such as: books, bibles, and magazines as well as tarps and willows for the sweat lodges, socks, dress clothes,
and yarn! We received $62,737 worth of donated items!

**Technology**

**Volgistics:** In August of 2016 we implemented Volgistics, an online volunteer system that we use to process online volunteer applications, track training dates, track background checks, and maintain all volunteer data! It also has a feature called VicTouch that allows us to track volunteer’s entering and leaving each facility. This system has improved our volunteer program tremendously! We have access to real data that can aid targeted efforts in improving our volunteer program. We have one centralized method for tracking training and background checks to ensure only approved volunteers are entering IDOC facilities; paperwork has been cut in half; volunteers can submit applications, update contact info, and check schedules and hours online; and VRC’s are better able to maintain communication with each volunteer.

**Laserfiche:** In 2017, we started using Laserfiche, software the Department uses to automate business processes and manage content digitally, to process volunteer applications and Level 2 volunteer requests. This streamlines our processes, allows for accountability and transparency at each step, eliminates hard copy forms, and helps us provide better customer service to our volunteers!

**VRC’s**

We have a team of amazing Volunteer Religious Coordinators (VRC) at each site working tirelessly to ensure volunteer and religious activities run without a hitch. Not only do these folks coordinate, recruit, and manage volunteers, but they also coordinate and supervise religious activities, handle religious property, coordinate marriages, handle crisis calls, etc. On average, the VRC’s statewide answer over a thousand concern forms each month. This year they managed **5,483 inmate-led** religious services and **9,109 volunteer-led** services or classes. This involves a great deal of tracking, coordinating, scheduling, and collaborating to ensure these services and classes take place!

**Highlights**

At SICI PRC, volunteer Barbara Freeman teamed up with our VRC Kathy Bauman to spearhead the Jerusalem Orphan Project. Through this project, ladies at SICI PRC crocheted blankets and hats for an orphanage in Israel that serves both Jewish and Palestinian orphans.

Also at SICI PRC, the yoga class brought in by Jenn Crawford, owner of Zen Riot Studio, was featured on KTVB news for the mindfulness and mediation brought to women behind bars!

At SBWCC, the special events were the highlight of the year! The LDS volunteers held a fellowship event and family picnic that was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Riding High Ministries held an event about breaking wild horses followed by an inspirational message about taming our own wild
hearts. The ladies were also treated to concerts by Eddie B. and the Nashville Tribute Choir as well as a car and bike show from Freedom on the Inside. SBWCC volunteers finished the year with a bang, overflowing the facility with toys and wrapping paper donations for the toy drive!

Neither distance nor weather can hinder our volunteers! Michael Doge, a volunteer at SAWC drove to St. Anthony from Idaho Falls twice a week to provide services! This same volunteer has provided over 134 hours of service at IFCRC as well! Judy Salisbury and Marilyn Forsman have travelled over snowy roads in the winter along the South Fork of the Clearwater River to serve the inmates and their families through our Story-Link Program in Orofino.

Cookies and stockings highlighted the volunteer program at IMSI as volunteers across faiths handed out Christmas cookies, generously donated by Mark Renick. When asked to donate toys for inmates’ children, the volunteers stepped up and filled up stockings in no time.

ISCC, with the help of VRC Rob Wright, is excellent at building partnerships! This year alone they established a creative writing class with the College of Southern Idaho and a local dance company; partnered with Boise State University to continue sending their debate team in to teach inmates; and teamed up with Mission 43 and the Boise Bicycle Project to begin a bicycle restoration program this year!

In September, Misty May, a resident at EBCRC, provided an awe-inspiring speech at the 2017 Community Information Resource Fair (CIRF). Misty did a wonderful job pushing aside her fears and anxiety and spoke honestly to members of the community about her experience. EBCRC Manager Liz Neville made sure Misty was well-prepared with practice runs, business attire, and even her children’s attendance to make the day a special one.

We are looking forward to another great year in 2018!

Thank you!!