

# Resources for Working with Volunteers

Summer Institute 2012

Volunteer Issues Committee of Literacy Action Network

- In 2009-2010, the Volunteer Issues Committee of Literacy Action Network conducted focus groups with ABE staff. The following list of resources were requested by participants. (Updated March 2015)
- For more information and the complete summary of focus group results, visit Literacy Action Network at [www.literacyactionnetwork.org](http://www.literacyactionnetwork.org)

	Commonly needed resources:	Where they can currently be found:
Recruitment	More volunteers in the classroom	<p>Most ABE programs have a volunteer coordinator that can assist with recruitment.</p> <p>The Minnesota Literacy Council website has a page where volunteer coordinators can post opportunities at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/postavolunteeropportunity">www.mnliteracy.org/postavolunteeropportunity</a></p> <p>The information is seen by potential volunteers at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/volunteers/opportunities/adults/find">www.mnliteracy.org/volunteers/opportunities/adults/find</a></p> <p>A list of recruitment ideas are in the Volunteer Management Tools on the Minnesota Literacy Council website <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/recruitment">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/recruitment</a></p> <p>Post a message and ask your volunteers to share with their contacts on Facebook <a href="http://www.facebook.com">www.facebook.com</a></p> <p>Post your opportunities with the Retired Educators Association of MN (REAM) at <a href="http://www.mnream.org/helpneeded.html">http://www.mnream.org/helpneeded.html</a></p>
	Variety of volunteer roles	<p>Creative ideas for using volunteers can be found in an online course by MLC titled "Using Volunteers in the Classroom" available at <a href="http://online.themlc.org">http://online.themlc.org</a>.</p> <p>Sample position descriptions for a variety of volunteer roles are in the Volunteer Management Tools on the Minnesota Literacy Council website <a href="http://mnliteracy.org/volunteermanagementtools">http://mnliteracy.org/volunteermanagementtools</a></p>
	Marketing skills	<p>Contact local colleges to see if there is marketing class you can partner with to utilize their marketing skills. They could create flyers and other materials to distribute in the community. This could be a service-learning opportunity for them and a way to bolster your volunteer recruitment.</p>

	How to recruit learners to volunteer	Many tips related to recruitment can be found in the Volunteer Management Handbook at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/recruitment">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/recruitment</a>
	Marketing to stay at home parents	Contact local ECFE (Early Childhood Family Education) programs and/or elementary schools, where you could attend a PTO or PTA meeting, to recruit parents.
	Training on expectations (taking direction)	Expectations are included in the Volunteer Management Tools on the Minnesota Literacy Council website <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/application">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/application</a> . See “Conduct Agreement” and “Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers.” Modify these documents to meet your program’s expectations and discuss them during the orientation.
Orientation	Screening and commitment resources/ qualifications for volunteering	Resources for addressing these issues are available in the Volunteer Management Tools on the Minnesota Literacy Council website <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/application">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/application</a>
	Video	Interactive online trainings that include videos are available for volunteers at <a href="http://online.themlc.org">http://online.themlc.org</a> .
	Checklist for orientation	A sample checklist with suggested points to cover during orientation is available in the Volunteer Management Tools on the Minnesota Literacy Council website <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/application">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/application</a>
	Appropriate dress guidelines	Modify the “Conduct Agreement” document to fit your needs. It can be found in the Volunteer Management Tools on the Minnesota Literacy Council website <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/application">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/application</a>
	More training	The Minnesota Literacy Council provides several workshops and trainings. Volunteers may come to the literacy council office in St. Paul or trainers may come to your program for a customized training. See schedules at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/volunteers/training">www.mnliteracy.org/volunteers/training</a> and information about customized training at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/custom-trainings">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/custom-trainings</a>
Training	Online Training	Brief, online, interactive, free trainings are available for ESL or ABE/GED volunteers at <a href="http://online.themlc.org">http://online.themlc.org</a>
	Information about how adults learn languages	See the video “Second Language Acquisition in Under 5 Minutes” at <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3_LOBBLmgYc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3_LOBBLmgYc</a>
	Cultural handouts that summarize information about the learners’ cultures	The Cultural Toolkit from ECHO Minnesota has one-page Cultural Information sheets at <a href="http://www.echominnesota.org/tools/cultural-toolkit">http://www.echominnesota.org/tools/cultural-toolkit</a>  Minnesota Humanities Center has videos and workshops on many cultures. <a href="http://minnesotahumanities.org">http://minnesotahumanities.org</a>

	<p>Culture-grams: concise, reliable, and up-to-date reports on more than 200 countries, each U.S. state, and all 13 Canadian provinces and territories.</p> <p><a href="http://www.culturegrams.com">www.culturegrams.com</a></p>
Videos on correct vs. incorrect tutoring	<p>“Maximizing Volunteers in the Classroom:” Created by a seasoned volunteer, this video includes tips for how volunteers can help in an adult education classroom. Hear ideas for developing effective relationships between volunteers and staff. See examples of how volunteers can successfully support adult learners.</p> <p><a href="http://youtu.be/49i1z86WOLg">http://youtu.be/49i1z86WOLg</a></p>
Staff training: quick tips for working with volunteers	<p>“Maximizing Volunteers in the Classroom:” Created by a seasoned volunteer, this video includes tips for how volunteers can help in an adult education classroom. Hear ideas for developing effective relationships between volunteers and staff. See examples of how volunteers can successfully support adult learners.</p> <p><a href="http://youtu.be/49i1z86WOLg">http://youtu.be/49i1z86WOLg</a></p> <p>The Minnesota Literacy Council distributes Volunteer Support Updates that include short articles on working with volunteers. Send your name and email address to <a href="mailto:arunchey@mnliteracy.org">arunchey@mnliteracy.org</a> to sign up for the updates.</p>
Training for students’ specific levels, such as lower level	<p>The Minnesota Literacy Council offers a wide variety of In-Service Workshops available at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/volunteers/training/tutor-in-service-workshops">www.mnliteracy.org/volunteers/training/tutor-in-service-workshops</a> that address specific learner levels. Additional workshops may be selected from the Training Catalog at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/custom-trainings">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/custom-trainings</a></p> <p>Online courses for teaching literacy level or multilevel classes, which can be taken by volunteers or staff, are available from Minnesota Literacy Council at <a href="http://online.themlc.org">http://online.themlc.org</a>.</p>
Finding good resources	<p>The Educational Website Search is a search engine of pre-screened web resources that are appropriate for adult educators to use directly with their learners online or as classroom resources. <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/edweb">www.mnliteracy.org/edweb</a></p>
Suggestions/tips for tutors	<p>Tutor Tips from the Minnesota Literacy Council are available on a wide number of topics at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/tutortips">www.mnliteracy.org/tutortips</a></p>
Staff: low-prep activities to give volunteers	<p>A two-page handout of low-prep activities is included in an online course by the literacy council titled "Using Volunteers in the Classroom" available at <a href="http://online.themlc.org">http://online.themlc.org</a>.</p> <p>Browse the Tutor Tips for easy-to-follow instructions for tutors to lead an activity for learners at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/tutortips">www.mnliteracy.org/tutortips</a></p>
NRS Information	<p>Detailed information about tracking NRS information is available online at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/mabe">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/mabe</a> The Minnesota Literacy Council also has an ABE Data Coordinator on staff to answer questions.</p>
Training topics	<p>Sample training topics can be found by reviewing those offered in the Minnesota Literacy Council’s Training Catalog at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/custom-trainings">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/custom-trainings</a></p>

Training	Guidelines for volunteers	A Volunteer Conduct Agreement is available in the Volunteer Management on the literacy council website. You can modify it to fit the specific needs of your program. <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/application">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/application</a>
	Lesson plans for CASAS	<i>Reading for Life</i> is a two-volume collection of worksheets and activities published by the Minnesota Department of Education and designed to enhance the teaching of life and work skills to adult ESL and ABE learners. Accessible at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/tools/reading-for-life">www.mnliteracy.org/tools/reading-for-life</a>  The Volunteer Curriculum from the Minnesota Literacy Council includes a several units for ESL learners, written in a format designed for volunteers. Includes pre-literate through advanced levels. <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/tools/volunteer-esl-curriculum">www.mnliteracy.org/tools/volunteer-esl-curriculum</a>
	Training on working with volunteers who have mental health issues	The ABE Disability Manual includes resources and information designed to equip ABE practitioners with the knowledge needed to effectively work with persons with disabilities. <a href="http://mn.abedisabilities.org/">http://mn.abedisabilities.org/</a>
	Math	“Creating an Engaging Math Class” This video features ideas for teaching student-centered math lessons for adult English language learners. Created by and for volunteers who lead math classes or small groups. <a href="http://youtu.be/LaalZf4L_3w">http://youtu.be/LaalZf4L_3w</a>  Intermediate Math for Adults is includes interactive activities specifically designed for intermediate ESL. It also includes teacher resources which can be used to train volunteers. <a href="http://sites.google.com/site/mnabeesmath/">http://sites.google.com/site/mnabeesmath/</a>  Massachusetts ABE Curriculum Framework for Mathematics and Numeracy includes guiding principles and a list of “habits of mind” that encourage success in learning math. <a href="http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/frameworks/mathnum.pdf">http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/frameworks/mathnum.pdf</a>  Hubbs Center has math resources at <a href="http://hubbs.spps.org/Math.html">http://hubbs.spps.org/Math.html</a>
Risk Management	Volunteer contract	Sample contracts stating basic volunteer policies and expectations are available in the Volunteer Management Tools from the Minnesota Literacy Council. Modify them to fit the needs of your program. <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/application">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/application</a>
	Screening	Materials to assist in screening, including sample applications and reference forms, are available in the Volunteer Management Tools from the Minnesota Literacy Council. Modify them to fit the needs of your program. <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/application">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/application</a>
	Exiting a volunteer	Suggestions for ending a volunteer relationship are available in the Volunteer Management Tools from the Minnesota Literacy Council. <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/risk-management">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/risk-management</a>
	Conduct agreement	A sample conduct agreement can be downloaded and modified to fit your program’s needs from the Volunteer Management Tools at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/application">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/application</a>

	Volunteer right to recourse	A volunteer's rights are clearly stated in the Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities document, which can be downloaded and modified to fit your program's needs from the Volunteer Management Tools at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/application">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/application</a>
	Complaint form	The Volunteer Management Tools on the Minnesota Literacy Council website provides tools for both teacher and volunteer evaluation at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/evaluation">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/evaluation</a>
	Legal issues	The literacy council's Volunteer Management Tools includes an overview of the importance of providing a consistent screening and follow-up process with all volunteers and more tips. <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/risk-management">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/risk-management</a>  Energize, Inc. provides articles on risk and liability in volunteer programs at <a href="http://www.energizeinc.com/art/subj/risk.html">http://www.energizeinc.com/art/subj/risk.html</a>
	Reassignment options	The opportunity for reassignment should be stated during the orientation process. This can be found in the Rights and Responsibilities section as well as the Volunteer Conduct Agreement, found in the Volunteer Management Tools at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/application">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/application</a>
Recognition	Quick and easy ways to recognize volunteers	The literacy council recognizes volunteers as "Literacy Leaders" in newsletters and on the Volunteer Voice blog at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/volunteers/blog">www.mnliteracy.org/volunteers/blog</a> . Nominate a volunteer by emailing <a href="mailto:mshah@mnliteracy.org">mshah@mnliteracy.org</a> with the volunteer's name and why he or she is a "Literacy Leader."  An easy-to-read list of recognition ideas is available from the Minnesota Literacy Council's Volunteer Management Tools at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/recognition">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/recognition</a>
	Research on what volunteers need/want	Articles on recognizing volunteers are available from Energize, Inc. at <a href="http://www.energizeinc.com/art/subj/recogn.html">www.energizeinc.com/art/subj/recogn.html</a>
	Certificates	The Minnesota Literacy Council offers free, personalized volunteer recognition certificates. Request them at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/certificates">http://www.mnliteracy.org/certificates</a>
	Statewide and National Volunteer Awards	The Minnesota Literacy Council gives awards to outstanding volunteers and community partners each year. Find more information and nomination forms at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/awards">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/awards</a>  Points of Light Foundation offers many national awards for outstanding volunteers at <a href="http://www.pointsoflight.org/programs/recognition">www.pointsoflight.org/programs/recognition</a>  In the Twin Cities area, nominate a volunteer for KARE 11's "Eleven Who KARE" at <a href="http://www.kare11.com/life/community/11whocare">www.kare11.com/life/community/11whocare</a>
	Governor's recognition of literacy volunteers	Request a proclamation from the Governor at <a href="http://mn.gov/governor/policy/proclamations/">http://mn.gov/governor/policy/proclamations/</a>

	<p>CEU's (Continuing Education Units for volunteers who would like to keep teacher licensure current)</p>	<p>CEU's are offered for many of the Minnesota Literacy Council trainings. Information about trainings is at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/training">www.mnliteracy.org/training</a>. Online trainings for CEU's are also available at <a href="http://online.themlc.org">http://online.themlc.org</a></p>
Reporting/Data	<p>Database for volunteers</p>	<p>Volunteer data can be tracked using the statewide MABE database, which is also used to track student progress. Information is at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/mabe">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/mabe</a></p> <p>ATLAS provides support for staff who track volunteer and learner data at <a href="http://www.atlasabe.org/professional/support-services">www.atlasabe.org/professional/support-services</a></p>
General	<p>Access to volunteer resources and training in Greater Minnesota</p>	<p>For volunteers and programs in Greater Minnesota, the Minnesota Literacy Council offers a variety of online resources at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org">www.mnliteracy.org</a></p> <p>Trainers are available to travel to programs to conduct on-site, customized trainings. Information is at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/custom-trainings">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/custom-trainings</a></p> <p>Consultations about volunteer-related issues and training in Greater Minnesota are available by request. Contact the Volunteer Outreach Coordinator at <a href="mailto:arunchey@mnliteracy.org">arunchey@mnliteracy.org</a> or the Training Manager at <a href="mailto:rpodlasek@mnliteracy.org">rpodlasek@mnliteracy.org</a>.</p> <p>Funding for accommodations are available for Greater Minnesota staff to travel to the Volunteer Management Conference each fall. Information at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/trainings">http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/trainings</a> Trainers from the literacy council also present at regional professional development workshops throughout Minnesota.</p>
	<p>Tutor blog</p>	<p>Several blogs sponsored by the Minnesota Literacy Council are available for volunteer tutors to share their experiences. These include the Volunteer Voice at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/volunteers/blog">www.mnliteracy.org/volunteers/blog</a> and the Tutor Tips blog at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/tools/tutor-tips">www.mnliteracy.org/tools/tutor-tips</a></p> <p>Start a blog for tutors at your program for free at <a href="http://www.blogger.com">www.blogger.com</a></p>
	<p>Network with other volunteer programs</p>	<p>Attend the annual one-day <a href="#">Volunteer Management Conference</a>, which includes networking and professional development workshops for staff who work with volunteers.</p>
	<p>More students</p>	<p>The literacy council's Adult Literacy Hotline refers students to programs in the Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota. Learners may call or search the database online at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/hotline">www.mnliteracy.org/hotline</a> for information about programs statewide. Literacy council staff conducts outreach to learners throughout the year. Update your program's information by contacting <a href="mailto:mshah@mnliteracy.org">mshah@mnliteracy.org</a></p>
	<p>Logistics for working with volunteers</p>	<p>Elements of a Successful Volunteer Program, Policies and Procedures, and other resources can be found in the literacy council's Volunteer Management Tools at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools</a></p>

	A lead volunteer	Assign a more experienced volunteer to be a lead volunteer who can help you with some coordinating and tasks that use higher/more challenging skills.
	A volunteer coordinator	Assign a lead volunteer to help with coordination or ask a staff person to be responsible for coordinating volunteer. There are many tools, resources, trainings and professional organizations available to help coordinators:  Energize, Inc. <a href="http://www.energizeinc.com">www.energizeinc.com</a>  MAVA, Minnesota Association for Volunteer Administration <a href="http://www.mavanetwork.org">www.mavanetwork.org</a>  Our Shared Resources <a href="http://www.oursharedresources.com">www.oursharedresources.com</a>  Thinkfinity.org <a href="http://www.thinkfinity.org">www.thinkfinity.org</a>
	Communication	Recommendations for communication with volunteers can be found in the Volunteer Management Tools on the Minnesota Literacy Council's website at <a href="http://www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/essential-elements">www.mnliteracy.org/educators/adult/resources/tools/essential-elements</a>
	Additional funding	Some volunteers work at companies that will donate money to the school or non-profit organization that they volunteer with each year. Ask your volunteers if their employer participates in this type of program. The program may require a certain amount of service hours to be verified.
Time	Time to talk with volunteers	Maximize student work time to check-in with volunteers. For example, while students are doing a writing project, or silent reading, take that opportunity to talk with the volunteer about how things are going, feedback, etc.