



2013 MAVA Legislative Priorities

The **impact of volunteerism in Minnesota is massive** and **volunteerism infrastructure is vital** throughout our state. That means we have a responsibility to be a **powerful voice for volunteerism and civic participation**. We also need to support the infrastructure – training, connections to opportunities and tools that create awareness of civic engagement – that makes volunteerism a great value to our citizens. In order to **strengthen volunteerism**, we need to do more to build a strong volunteerism infrastructure that reaches all corners of Minnesota.

We currently have a great opportunity to better meet the needs of Minnesotans by incorporating volunteerism even more deeply into our communities. Through the joint work of the **Minnesota Association for Volunteer Administration (MAVA)** and the **Volunteer Centers of Minnesota**, we have developed these priorities.

- 1. Initiate a comprehensive assessment of volunteerism and volunteerism infrastructure in Minnesota:**
Using the results of this assessment, we will develop a comprehensive plan for volunteerism that addresses the gaps in volunteer infrastructure across the state. Assessment results will help identify and share ways to leverage what organizations do best to develop creative and innovative solutions to meet critical issues.
- 2. Convene a Council of “Experts in the Field” to address ways to improve collaboration efforts:**
Collaboration is one way to help close the gaps we see in volunteerism and related infrastructure. The “Experts” group will identify efforts that could help improve sustainability and outreach.
- 3. Bring to scale current efforts by the Volunteer Centers and MAVA to provide training, consultation and resources on volunteer engagement. This will take service to the next level by:**
 - Expanding training opportunities.
 - Providing resources to support research in the field of volunteerism.
 - Evaluating and developing best practices in areas such as skill-based volunteerism, boomer engagement and engaging immigrant and refugee communities.
 - Building Volunteer Centers’ capacity to connect citizens to opportunities and - where access is limited - create a statewide portal to connect volunteers with opportunities.
 - Expanding the means to connect volunteers with opportunities in parts of the state that do not currently have Volunteer Centers.
- 4. Initiate statewide marketing and communications efforts around volunteerism:** Develop a statewide strategy to encourage more Minnesotans to become civically engaged and create communication tools to support this effort.
- 5. Support the creation of a Civic Involvement Innovation Fund to provide resources for organizations to update volunteer leadership practices and develop new approaches to meet serious challenges.**

As a **result** of implementing these priorities, **hundreds of organizations could be connected with the resources and training necessary to build their own internal capacity**. More importantly, **thousands more Minnesotans would have an opportunity** to engage in and support the causes they care about through volunteerism, **strengthening our state** along the way. See the link to ***A Strategy to Increase Capacity for Minnesota Volunteerism*** on the MAVA Public Affairs page at www.mavanetwork.org/publicaffairs for more details.