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Colleen LaRose  
President and CEO at NERETA

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## Should the public workforce system coordinate volunteer opportunities for jobseekers?

Jun 29, 2015 | 108 views | 2 likes | 2 comments | LinkedIn Facebook Google+ Twitter

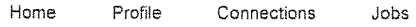
Three years ago NERETA posed this question on the NERETA Linked In group:

*Should volunteer opportunities in the community be offered (or suggested) to those on unemployment as a way to gain new skills and network? Does your region do this?*

Regions reported for the most part that they do not coordinate volunteer opportunities at their job center...but nearly all thought it was a good idea.

So why isn't this initiative part of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)?

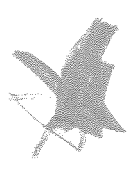
Helping people out of work to find volunteer activities in their region is a good idea! And it is clearly not only good for the community, but also good for the jobseeker.


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- Volunteering helps jobseekers keep their skills current.
- Volunteering helps jobseekers "try on" new skills, such as leadership, in a non-threatening environment.
- Volunteering provides great content for resumes to fill in spaces where there are gaps in employment.
- Volunteering provides the opportunity for networking and demonstrating skills to people in the community who may be able to help the jobseeker find employment.
- Volunteering builds self-esteem.
- Volunteering keeps jobseekers from feeling so isolated and abandoned during a difficult time in their lives.

In most regions around the country, there is surprising little coordination of volunteer activities. In some regions there is a chapter of DOVIA (Directory of Volunteers In Agencies) to help volunteers understand what types of volunteer activities are available in the region, (what times of day/night, weekends, weekdays volunteering is needed, etc.). But DOVIA is certainly not ubiquitous. Sometimes the Department of State or Department of Community Relations at the state level will provide some information about volunteering. Some people even turn to Craigslist to learn about volunteer opportunities in their region. But these are all very passive forms of engaging volunteers...and none of them specifically targets people who are looking for work and NEED to be in the community networking.

NERETA believes that it should be the role of the America's Job Centers to ACTIVELY relay information about vetted volunteer opportunities in the region to jobseekers. Volunteering should be...well, voluntary, in that there should be no requirement tied to getting unemployment benefits etc. But putting up signs in the Job Center encouraging volunteering, providing a website with current volunteer opportunities available, and even going a step further and providing a monthly meeting of jobseekers interested in volunteering with local non-profits looking for volunteers can be powerful. Envision jobseekers describing the skills they have to bring to the non-profits, and the non-profits describing the volunteer activities they have available to the jobseekers...and being right there to engage with the jobseeker to answer questions about the volunteer opportunities that they have available.







NERETA provided a webinar last year to demonstrate the power of a program like this, where the Job Center helps to match jobseeker skills to non-profits looking for those skills in volunteers. Workforce Investment Board (WIB) Director Jeff Turgeon and his staff at Central Massachusetts WIB and a couple of members of his staff explained how they run the program and the great success they have seen from this initiative.

This volunteer matching should be a part of the menu of basic services that all WIB's provide through their Job Centers. It costs very little to do, has a great positive impact on the community and proactively helps jobseekers to network in their community, to use their skills and to gain new skills for FREE.

**NERETA feels this is so important, that we want to share this webinar with you for FREE.**

**Just go to the website: <http://jobt.tv/nereta/volunteer>**


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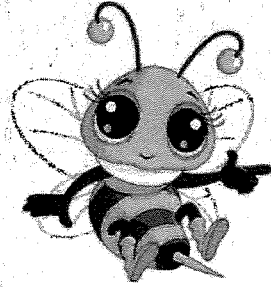
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**If this post inspires you to start a Volunteer Connections program at your Job Center, please "like" the article, comment below to let us know...or email: colleen@nereta.org. We really want to know if the information we are providing to you is making a real difference.**

NERETA is proud to bring you "information you can use"...that you are not getting from anywhere else. Help us to continue to provide this kind of important information and best practices to you! Become a NERETA Member today!

[www.nereta.org](http://www.nereta.org)





*Hmmm...By the way...*

Have you signed up yet to become a NERETA member?



Written by



**Colleen LaRose**  
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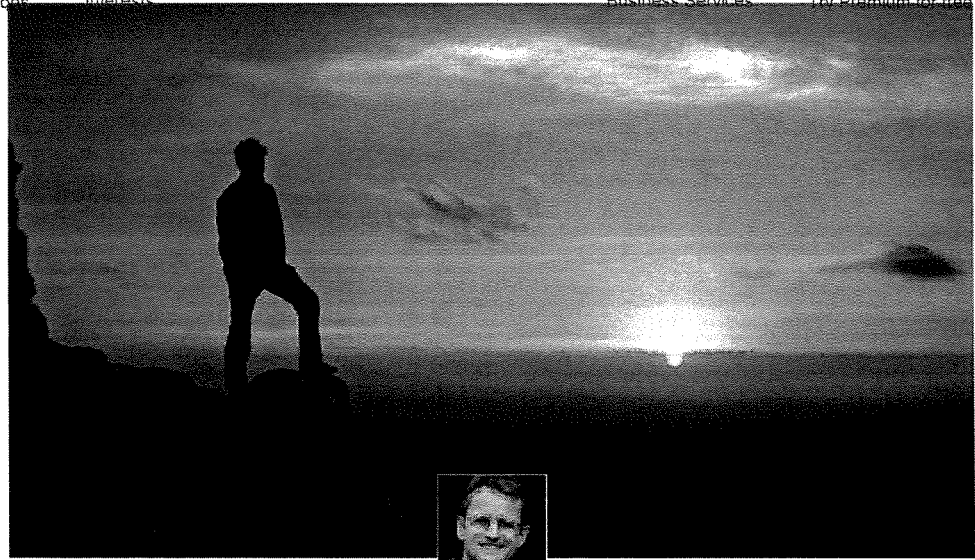

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**Michael Baker**  
 Manager-Strategic Planning & Innovation-Employment & Training, IL Dept. of Commerce & Economic Opportunity(DCEO)

A good idea, but I suggest taking it further by coordinating WIOA-funded work experience / internships at employer partners. Businesses can "try before buy" while jobseekers can "learn and earn".

Like Reply 11 hours ago

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Jeff Haden  
Ghostwriter, Speaker, Inc. Magazine Contributing Editor

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# The One Attitude Every Successful Person Has

Jun 29, 2015 | 253,265 views | 1,828 likes | 300 comments | LinkedIn Facebook Google+ Twitter

Does skill – and eventual achievement – result from an innate ability or from hard work, effort, and a burning desire to improve?

Good question... and the way we answer it can make a huge impact in the degree to which we succeed, especially over the long term.

And that's why I love this take from Gregory Ciotti, a Customer Champion at HelpScout.

**Here's Gregory:**

When I was a substitute teacher, perhaps nothing disappointed me as much when one young girl said: "Girls aren't good at math like boys are."

I was totally disheartened to think that even at a young age, some children thought abilities in subjects like mathematics were already defined as *innate*.

Of course I wasn't alone in my concern; psychologist Dr. Grant Halvorson has published excellent essays like *The Trouble With Bright Girls*, where she addresses how this "fixed mindset" sets students up for failure:

“