Volunteers are fundamental to many successful Extension programs. Research indicates that nearly one third of volunteers will choose not to continue volunteering based on poor management practices.

**Achieving the Extension Mission Through Volunteers** is an online cohort course for the novice extension professional working with volunteers to enhance and deliver Extension programs. This course is designed to highlight best practices in volunteer development and management and to help build staff and organizational capacity around volunteer management and development regardless of the program area.

**Overall course objectives**
Participants will:
- Increase volunteer management competencies.
- Build knowledge and skills related to identifying, recruiting, selecting, and supporting volunteers.
- Understand their own volunteer development approach, the organization’s philosophy related to volunteerism and current trends in volunteerism.

**Navigation**
- Cohort participants will receive an introductory email and link to the course site prior to the introductory week.
- Virtual meetings, pre-recorded presentations and activities are found on the course site.
- Click the tabs to move from one module to another. (Additional tabs will be added as the course progresses.)

**Course Structure**
- During this six-week course members participate in pre-recorded sessions, readings, activities, three live webinars, interact with a wide variety of resources and hear from experts. It will take participants four to six hours each week to complete the course.

Feedback from 2015 Pilot Participants:
- *This was a great course! I appreciated the variation in teaching approaches and the chance to chat with peers on the discussion board.”*
- “……I am definitely gaining new knowledge and skills out of the course.”
- “This has been one the most useful professional development experiences I have had in my 18 years of working in Extension.”

This course is being brought to you by the North Central Region 4-H Youth Development Volunteer Specialists.
Course at a glance – 2016

Week One: Introductory Week: Monday, January 18 – Sunday, January 24

- You are asked to explore the Achieving the Extension Mission Through Volunteers course site to become familiar with the course layout.
- Get to know other cohort members by participating in the Discussion Board.

Week Two: Monday, January 25 – Sunday, January 31 (Modules 1 and 2)

Module 1: Volunteerism in Extension
After this module you will be able to:
- Define volunteerism and how critical volunteers are to Extension programs.
- Recognize the elements of an effective volunteer delivery system and the role of the volunteer program manager within the context of local Extension programming.
- Assess current volunteer delivery systems including specific elements of volunteer development, volunteer system management and personal readiness.
- Identify your personal approach to volunteerism as it relates to your volunteer program manager role.

Chapter 1: What is Volunteerism?
- This chapter gives an overview of volunteerism across Extension including insights from Dean and Director Rick Klemme of Wisconsin and Associate Dean and Director Dorothy Freeman of Minnesota.

Chapter 2: The Volunteer System and Manager Role
- Consider the distinction between leading and developing people and managing systems.

Chapter 3: Extension Professional Development Model
- Jim Rutledge, Adjunct Professor and Executive Director 4-H Foundation, Inc. 4-H Foundation Development Manager at Oklahoma State University helps you think about how your own professional development stages influence the capacity to reach larger audiences with more valuable educational programs.

Recommended that participants complete Chapters 1-3 at least 1.5 hours prior to webinar.
Chapter 4: Live Webinar – Recognize Top Motivations of Volunteers (January 28, 2016; 11:30 am – 1:00 pm; CST)
- Overview of course
- Q & A
- Discuss participants’ course expectations
- Recognize top motivations of volunteers

Complete personal readiness assessment related to Volunteerism for the Next Generation (VNG) (post-webinar) 20 minutes

Chapter 5: Personal Approach to Volunteerism
- Identify your personal approach to volunteerism and how it relates to your professional role.

Module 2: Trends and Motivations
After this module you will be able to:
- Articulate trends in volunteerism, including identifying generational differences in volunteers, differentiating between traditional volunteers and potential new volunteer types.

Chapter 1: Trends and Motivations
- Consider the shifts in volunteering and how Extension programs can capitalize on these changes.

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Week Three: Monday, February 1 – Sunday, February 7

Module 3: Identifying and Recruiting Volunteers
After this module you will be able to:
- Conduct a community assessment of volunteer capacity.
- Create a volunteer role description to match identified needs.
- Develop a volunteer recruitment plan.

Chapter 1: Community Assessment of Volunteer Capacity
- Explore assessment tools for identifying new volunteers.

Chapter 2: Developing and Analyzing Role Descriptions
- Consider role descriptions and the volunteers who would be attracted to them.

Chapter 3: Developing a Recruitment Plan
- Consider what should be included in a recruitment plan.
- Create a “sales pitch” for recruiting a specific volunteer.
Week Four: Monday, February 8 – Sunday, February 14

Module 4: Selecting and Matching Volunteers
After this module you will be able to:
- Identify best practices of selecting volunteers.
- Locate local policies and procedures related to your program area.
- Explain components of a volunteer orientation.

Chapter 1: Purpose of the Volunteer Selection Process
- Consider the integrity of the volunteer selection process.

Chapter 2: Components of the Volunteer Selection Process
- Learn about the components necessary in the selection process.

Chapter 3: Interview Process
- Discover the resources your state provides to help in interviewing volunteers.

Chapter 4: Placement of Volunteers
- Consider the most appropriate placement of volunteers for both the program and the volunteer.

Chapter 5: Orienting Volunteers
- Learn what to include in orientation to help make volunteers great ambassadors of your program.

Week Five: Monday, February 15 – Sunday, February 21

Module 5: Supporting Volunteers
After this module you will be able to:
- Determine appropriate training for volunteers using role description.
- Apply formal and informal methods of recognizing volunteers according to their individual motivation.
- Build rapport with volunteers that reflect professional boundaries and communication.
- Apply appropriate coaching methods to volunteer systems management.
- Implement a comprehensive volunteer support system that includes training, coaching, and recognition.

Chapter 1: Training
- Determine training needs based on volunteer roles.
- Determine what training is required, necessary, and recommended.
- Consider adult learning theory and why is it important in volunteer training.
- Consider delivery methods for offering volunteer training.
Chapter 2: Recognition
• Explain volunteer motivation.
• Describe a culture of appreciation.

Chapter 3: Building Professional Relationships with Volunteers
• Build professional relationships with volunteers.
• Consider professional ethics and setting boundaries.

Chapter 4: Developing skills for Coaching
• Understand the skills needed for effective coaching.
• Learn ways of providing feedback.

Chapter 5: Dealing with Behaviors Inconsistent with Acceptable Standards
• Consider how to discipline and dismiss volunteers.

Recommended that participants complete Chapter 1-5 at least 1.5 hours prior to Webinar.

Chapter 6: Live Webinar – Handling Volunteer Dilemmas and Practicing Feedback (February 18, 2016; 11:30 am– 1:00 pm; CST)
• Learn the specifics of the coaching model.
• Understand how the decision tree for thinking through dilemmas in volunteer system management can help your program.
• Watch scenarios that will help you build skills in applying the volunteer coaching model as well as practicing and working through dilemmas involving volunteers.

Week Six: Monday, February 22 – Friday, February 26

Module 6: Communicating the Public Value of Volunteers
After this module you will:
• Understand the impact of volunteers to Extension and how they extend the university's reach.
• Distinguish the difference between individual, organizational and public value.
• Understand methods to assess stakeholder perspectives.
• Demonstrate how communicating value can be integrated into programming.
• Articulate the impact of volunteer involvement in your local program.

Chapter 1: Volunteers Communicating Public Value
• Understand the impact volunteers to Extension and how volunteers extend the resources of the university.
• Review the importance of communicating the value of volunteers.
• Consider how to help volunteers communicate public value.

Chapter 2: Personal, Organizational and Public Value
• Nancy Franz, Professor Emeritus, School of Education, Iowa State University discusses the importance of communicating public value as it relates to volunteers.
Chapter 3: Communicating Value
• Describe your volunteer program in sixty seconds. In this chapter you will learn the elements of an elevator speech and begin to craft your message.

Chapter 4: Live Webinar - Communicating the Public Value of Volunteers (February 23, 2016; Time 11:30 am – 1:00 pm; CST)
• Review all elements of this module.
• Understand who communicates value, and how that is done.

Wrap-up
• Module evaluations will be requested of all cohort members.
• Final Course Evaluation will be requested of all cohort members.

Course site will remain open for one week to allow for participant review and catch-up.