

Finding Volunteers for Network Activities

Betsy McCoach and Jill Adelson

Notes from Network Leadership Retreat 2012

- Create things for people to do that won't take long. Start new volunteers in minor roles and increase the scope slowly. Have more positions, not fewer. You engage more people and each task requires less time.
- Serving on a committee is a manageable way to become involved. Committee members will self-promote. Those who are interested and capable of doing more will be the most involved.
- State up front how much time something will take. One hour/month, on average, is reasonable. (Keeping in mind some months, like right before convention, might be a little more and some might be less.)
- Stay in contact with your committee members to keep them engaged. Make sure they have something to do. For months when there are no tasks, touch base to keep them updated.
- R&E has several committees including – program committee (made up of program chair, assistant program chair, network chair, and network chair-elect), membership (chaired by the secretary), communication, strategic initiatives (chaired by the treasurer; this is a new one for R&E), publications, elections, awards, policy (made up of past chairs).
- The committee chair finds and directs the volunteers. This is done through email invitations to volunteers and through requests at the business meeting (and a paper being passed for names/email addresses and committee preferences). Chairs are also encouraged to reach out to their contacts and invite them to join the committees.
- R&E has “policies” (written-down practices) that are based on earlier Division by-laws. They are more practices than by-laws and provide structure but are still flexible. R&E is working on creating a booklet of the structure and tasks so they can share information with the next generation of leaders.
- R&E has emailed the entire Network membership with a list of committee and has asked for volunteers. Next the chairs went out to find volunteers.
- Do not confine participation to those at the convention. Also, expand beyond university community. Draw in parents, teachers, etc. so not just talking to small group. Especially important under new membership structure.
- Misc. -- The elections are done internally, no rules for who can volunteer, current chair involves the chair-elect in everything so switch can be smooth.