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ILS 565-S70 Library Management

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Cost Finding Exercise

One of my first experiences working in a library was as a teen volunteer at the Worthington Public Library in Worthington, Ohio. Since I had a pleasant experience as a volunteer I have decided to calculate the costs for a similar volunteer program today.

Program Summary

Volunteers in the teen volunteer program would range in age from 12 to 18 years old, just as they did in the program in Worthington. Teens could complete tasks such as shelving books, assisting with the summer reading program, and helping with library events or other projects as assigned. As part of the program, teens would not be permitted to do tasks that required driving. The program would be advertised through posters in the library and local public and private schools. All participants would be required to complete an application and be interviewed by the library staff. Volunteers would be recruited for the summer and school year. Two times per year, volunteers would be reviewed formally. Recommendation letters would be provided for students applying to college, high school or other programs. There would be some form of reward given twice per year. This would be a pizza party or a small gift. For the assignment, I am imagining that the program has fifteen participants and is located in Tolland, Connecticut. Volunteers will be expected to complete a minimum of 2 hours of volunteer work per week. This was a requirement mentioned on some of the websites that I visited. It should be noted that the Tolland Public Library does not actually have a teen volunteer program.

Program Needs

A teen volunteer program would require some materials, staff time, advertising, and physical space. An article in the *American Libraries Magazine* pointed out the need for insurance and background checks for volunteers (Muller, 2010). Insurance could be useful in a teen volunteer program because it will provide supplemental coverage if volunteers are injured in the course of volunteering or to protect the library from liability. The auto insurance would only be necessary in cases where volunteers would be driving themselves to and from the library because teens would not be permitted to drive as part of assignments.

Costs

Direct Costs

Personnel	Total Cost	Number of Hours per Year for Program	Percentage of Total Hours	Cost to Program
6.97 FTE (278.8 hours per week if FTE= 40 hours)	\$307,654.00 “Regular Payroll”	683.8	4.7%	\$14,459.74
Training & Development	\$685		4.7%	\$32.20

(2012-2013 Budget)

Materials	Cost	Percentage Used by Program	Cost to Program
Photocopying ¹ for Training Sessions	\$36.15 (for 15 20 page packets)	100%	\$36.15
Appreciation Gifts	\$75.00 (\$5.00 per person)	100%	\$75.00
Name Tags ¹	\$19.99 (for 100)	15%	\$3.00
Other Black and White Photocopying ¹ (schedules, supplemental training sheets, invitations, mailings etc.)	\$24.75 (at \$0.15 per page) This could be less if more copies are made at the same time. ¹	100%	\$24.75
Color Copies ¹ (advertising posters)	\$14.70 (at \$0.49 per page) This could be	100%	\$14.70

	less if more copies are made at the same time.		
Computer with Microsoft Office Suite ^{1,5}	\$329.99 (PC) + \$139.99 (monitor) + \$149.99 (Office) + \$14.99 (Ethernet cable) = \$634.96 / 3 = \$211.65 (Cost per year)	4.7%	\$9.94
Printer and USB cable ^{1,5}	\$99.99 (printer) + \$20.00 (USB cable) = 119.99 / 3 = 39.99 (per year)	4.7%	\$1.88
Postage ²	\$20.70 (\$.46 per letter)	100%	\$20.70
Pizza, Soda, and Salad ³	\$115.81	100%	\$115.81
Office Supplies ⁴	\$3,000.00	4.7%	\$141.00
Storage Cabinet ^{1,5}	\$229.99 / 10 = \$23.00	100%	\$23.00
Computer Workstation with Ergonomic Chair ^{1,5}	(\$149.99 (desk) + \$179.99 (chair)) / 10 = 33.00	4.7%	\$1.55

1. (Staples, 2012) 2. (USPS, 2013) 3. (Donatos, 2011) 4. (2012-2013 Budget) 5. (Trustees of Dartmouth College, 2013).

Insurance	Cost	Percentage Used by Program	Cost to Program
Accident Insurance, Volunteer Liability Insurance, Excess Automobile Liability Insurance	\$414.20	100%	\$414.20

(CIMA Companies, Inc., 2013)

Background Check	Cost	Percentage Used by Program	Cost to Program
	\$9.00 to \$20.00 per check	100%	\$300.00

(League Sports Services, LLC, 2013)

Indirect Costs

Space	Total Area of Library	Percentage of Library Used by	Cost to Program
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		Program	
Maintenance of 6 square feet	13,500 square feet*	0.04%	The maintenance cost for this area will not be significant for cost finding.
Utilities for 6 square feet	\$24,850.13 estimated utilities for library	0.04%	\$9.94

* (Town of Tolland, 2012)

Total Costs

\$2623.82 (Total) / 15 = \$174.92 per volunteer per year or \$1.68 per hour

Methods

I began by making a list of supplies and staff time that would be needed for a teen volunteer program based on what I remembered from past experience. Then I looked for suggestions that might be available online for librarians who are starting volunteer programs. An article from the *American Libraries Magazine* suggested that library staff consider insurance and background checks for volunteer programs so I chose to include those items in my cost finding as well. At first, I thought that background checks would not be necessary for a teen volunteer program because the participants were so young. I looked at the application requirements for three library teen volunteer programs and discovered that two programs did not require background checks while one did. I chose to include background checks so that students would not have to get recommendation letters from already busy teachers and so that their behavior and ability could be judged just by the interview and background check. I calculated the costs of computer equipment, furniture, and copying by using Staples.com and selecting the lowest priced product that could possibly meet the needs of the program. I then divided the cost by the life expectancy of each item according to the Controller's Office at Dartmouth College to get the cost per year. I calculated the amount of pizza using the Donatos website and also used their

menu prices for my calculations. I used the U.S. Postal Service website to find the price of stamps to calculate the costs of mailings.

I realized that I needed to select an actual public library to base the assignment on in order to be able to calculate personnel costs and building related costs. My calculations are based on the 2012-2013 budget for the Town of Tolland, Connecticut as the Town Council approved it. The “Regular Payroll” includes the benefits and vacation pay for all staff members at the Tolland Public Library (Lucy, personal communication, April 1, 2013). The Library Director’s salary is included in this amount, so it was not included in indirect costs. I estimated the amount of time that would need to be put towards a teen volunteer program and found what percentage it would be out of the total hours worked per year by the library staff.

Librarians would need to manage each volunteer for a minimum of .5 hours per week. That would be enough time for the librarian to greet the volunteer, assign a task, give any explanation of the task that was not handled during training and follow-up with the volunteer at the end of his or her assigned time slot. The library staff would also have to respond to E-mail from volunteers asking questions and sharing scheduling information. I have allotted .15 hours per day for responding to this E-mail. (It should be noted that the Tolland Public Library is open 6 days per week.) Also, I have included 4 hours per month for library staff to create the volunteer schedule and 4 hours per month for updates to the website relating to teen volunteers. The staff would also have to manage a listing of E-mail addresses for volunteers and file emergency contact forms.

In addition to weekly and monthly tasks relating to the teen volunteer program, there would also be annual tasks that would require staff time. Volunteer applications would need to be reviewed and teens would need to be interviewed. At least two staff members, probably

librarians, would need to conduct the interviews. I estimated 40 hours for interviews. That would be .5 hours per interview for 20 candidates multiplied by 2 staff members plus another .5 hours per candidate to preparation before the interview and discuss afterwards. Another 40 hours would be necessary for the two librarians to review applications and decide whom to interview. That time would also include the scheduling of appointments. Before volunteering, teens would have to be trained to shelve books and carry out other tasks. I estimated that the training would take 4 hours with an additional 2 hours divided between set up and clean up. It would also require about 10 hours of planning. This would include the creation of or search for training materials and time to plan activities.

Librarians would also have to evaluate the volunteers twice a year. During each evaluation period, the librarian would spend .5 hours completing an evaluation form and .5 hours minutes discussing the evaluation with volunteers. This time would be multiplied by 15 for the number of volunteers then multiplied by 2 since it occurs twice a year. Many of the teen volunteers will need recommendation letters for college applications or jobs. I estimate that it would take the library staff 15 hours per year to write these letters. That would be one hour per volunteer per year. The pizza party would be 2 hours long. The planning, set up, and clean up would take about 8 hours. I concluded that the staff would spend about 683.8 hours per year working on the teen volunteer program.

The Tolland Public Library is part of the municipal complex. The various organizations in the building do not have separate maintenance and utilities listings in the budget (circulation staff, personal communication, March 28, 2013). I calculated the percentage of the building that belonged to the library and used it to find the utilities cost for the library.

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