

# Volunteer groups need students

Positions in clerical, support staff, Big Brother/Sister available

By Tony Lewis  
Emerald Contributor

Some people do it for job experience, some because they are lonely and bored, and others because "they want to save the world somehow."

Whatever the motivation, Terry Laks, director of the Volunteer Connection, an organization that helps place volunteers in 135 non-profit agencies in Lane County, is always pleased to have people volunteer for community service.

"We want to find out what your motivation is for volunteering, but volunteering for any type of reason is fine," she said.

Depending on interests and time commitment, volunteering can offer a variety of experiences. Volunteers can do anything from reading to the blind to walking dogs at the Humane Society to gaining counseling experience at the Aslan House Counseling Center, Laks said.

"One of the most crying needs in our community is for drivers to deliver meals, bring kids to counseling and drive the elderly on errands," she said, adding that clerical work

is another big need in the community.

Laks said she realizes filing papers or answering phones did not fulfill many volunteers' needs. They may feel that they aren't making an impact, she said. So she makes sure that volunteers understand that without clerical help organizations like the Willamette AIDS Council and SCAR/Jasper Mountain, which works to prevent child abuse, could not operate.

"When they're typing they're helping to eradicate AIDS and child abuse," she said.

Irene Van Dusen, manager of the volunteer referral program at Volunteer Connection, said that when most people decide to volunteer they don't know exactly what they want to do or who to contact. The Volunteer Connection, which started in Lane County in October 1988, and has since doubled the volunteers it places, is set up to help these people who want to volunteer but don't know where to start.

People interested in volunteering should contact the Volunteer Connection, Van Dusen said, and she or another place-

ment counselor will set up an appointment for them to come to the office at the YMCA building.

In the appointment, which usually lasts about 30 to 45 minutes, the placement counselor tries to match the volunteer's interests, experience and time commitment with a job that one of the agencies has requested.

For example, if a student is a business major who enjoys working with children but also wants some business-related experience, the placement counselor might suggest volunteering with Junior Achievement, an organization designed to give school kids an introduction to business and economics.

Rick Kissock, President of Junior Achievement of Lane County Inc, said that although JA has never had any University students involved in the program, "it's ideal for students."

The JA experience for a University volunteer would probably include teaching four one-hour sessions to seventh grad-

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