

# 2009 Volunteer Survey Report

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October 15, 2009

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## Overview

From April 19 to June 15, 2009, volunteers had the opportunity to provide feedback on their volunteer experience and offer suggestions for improvement. The survey was initially only available as a web-based survey. Volunteers with email accounts were sent a link to the survey. Those volunteers without an email address were asked to contact Volunteer Services for a paper copy of the survey. Volunteers received an hour of volunteer time for completing the survey. Of the 369 active volunteers, a total of 144 filled out the survey for a 39% response rate (compared to 46% in 2008 and 41% in 2007). Fewer volunteers responded this year in comparison to previous years though multiple avenues for receiving feedback were offered. Response rates between 25% and 30% are considered good for mail and internet surveys, giving this study a strong response rate. Nonetheless, the decline in responses indicates a possible over-surveying of the volunteers through the annual and exhibit training surveys throughout the year.

The majority of survey questions are similar to the surveys administered in 2007 and 2008, allowing for a comparison of responses. Each comparison is shared and discussed below. In addition, responses from volunteers to many questions were lengthy and detailed; separate appendices are attached containing all of the commentary provided by volunteer respondents to the open-ended questions on the survey. In the report, selections of sample responses were included after open-ended questions. The “n” values provided in each table reflect how many volunteers answered that question.

## Results and Discussion

### Volunteer Experience

Volunteers were asked to rate the past year of volunteer experience at SMM. Nearly all (94%) of the volunteers had a “good” or “exceptional” experience volunteering. Few volunteers rated their experiences lower, with only 5% of volunteers rating their experience as fair and 1% as poor (see Table 1). In comparison to the two previous surveys, the proportion of volunteers rating their experience as exceptional has decreased while the proportion rating it good has increased.

***Table 1: Overall Rating of Experience at SMM***

	Exceptional	Good	Fair	Poor
<b>2009 (n=144)</b>	42%	52%	5%	1%
<b>2008 (n=221)</b>	45%	50%	5%	<1%
<b>2007 (n=221)</b>	52%	45%	3%	0%

Volunteers were asked to explain their overall experience rating. A list of all responses to this question is included in Appendix A. Responses are coded into themes. Major themes that arose from the data include: support and communication, paid staff, training sessions, experience with visitors, volunteering experience, and volunteer spaces. These themes also arose in the 2008 Volunteer Survey. Support and communication relates to the interactions between the volunteers and supervisors; paid staff refers to all staff in the museum; volunteer spaces are all the areas within the museum that volunteers work or spend time in, and training sessions are those statements made by volunteers that comment on the training sessions they have participated in. Experiences with visitors are statements that relate to the volunteers’ interactions with visitors, and volunteering experience is a theme of general museum-based

experiences that the volunteers share. Volunteers shared both positive and negative responses. Responses were coded by theme only and not by whether they were positive or negative. Examples of each theme are shared below. The individual who was unsatisfied with their experience shared that “I had a personal problem with the museum offering a prayer room last October when Muslim people from Somalia were given a prayer room at the end of Ramadan. No one could give me a straight answer as to why this was done, while Jews and Christians are not afforded the same opportunity. Did you see a special prayer room this year on Good Friday for Christians to use, or Jewish people at Passover? When I asked if a prayer room would be made available for Muslims this coming October, I waited patiently, but received no reply. Therefore I resigned.”

### ***Explanations for Overall SMM Experience Rating***

#### *13% (17) Support and communication*

- Always an honor to represent the museum to our visitors. We have fairly good communication to the staff.
- Good support from the office and appreciation shown from floor staff and office for work I did. "Thanks" goes a long way with me.
- Because of no e-mail, I am not informed of some special events for volunteers.

#### *14% (19) Paid staff*

- SMM staff is always very helpful and pleasant to work with.
- Members of the department were friendly and congenial. Had good rapport with supervisor. Leaders in Volunteer headquarters were exceptionally helpful and efficient.
- Science Museum staff are welcoming and express appreciation for the work the volunteers perform. Volunteers are made to feel a part of the team we are working with.
- I enjoy the staff that I work with as well as the other volunteers. There is always a lot of activity where I volunteer.

#### *7% (9) Training sessions*

- Good training, excellent facilities.
- I enjoyed the experience and felt that it also provided meaningful support for the Science Museum. It could have been more enjoyable if I had been trained in more experiments.
- There seems to be a lack of direction to the volunteer program this past year. Training has been sporadic and not well planned. Much time is lost by untimely starting times. The museum staff does not appear to be well prepared.
- I have been trained, I have access to help, I have felt welcome, and I feel I am in a life-long learning environment.

#### *20% (27) Experience with visitors*

- I enjoy meeting people, including students, and explaining things to them. It is also a learning experience.
- I believe that visitors remember more and are happier when they have personal contact with museum staff and/or volunteers. On a personal level I like to learn new stuff and talk to the people.
- I have more participants in terms of students coming in groups and students coming with their parents. Was exceptional for the reactions of understanding and fulfillment they demonstrated.

*45% (60) Volunteer experience*

- An important factor in the volunteer experience is working with the other volunteers. I prefer to try new activities, most volunteers want to demonstrate the same activity over and over, and will consider changing activities.
- Overall, my experience at SMM has been very enjoyable, it has allowed me to connect and help educate the community with this job; my own knowledge has increased ever since I took this job, and overall the experience has been well worth it.

Four fifths of the volunteers (84%, n=123) felt that their comments were heard and responded to over the year. In addition, nearly all (97%, n=137) of the volunteers could tell how their work fit the museum’s mission. Though not easily compared to previous years, the presence of such a large number of volunteers feeling heard and recognizing their worth denotes significant improvements in volunteer morale and communication strategies from 2007 to 2009. In 2007, a theme of “improving morale of volunteers” was identified (see Pizza & Rademacher, Volunteer Survey Report: May 2007).

**Volunteer Training**

Volunteers were asked to indicate the last time they attended each of four types of training: Special Exhibits, Core Gallery, Museum-wide Workshops and Lectures, and Volunteer Department Potlucks (see Table 2). As seen below, of those volunteers that took the opportunity to attend one or more of the trainings, one quarter or more indicated that they have never attended these trainings. Sixty or more of the volunteers left various training spots blank, presumably because they had never attended any training in that area. Two thirds of the responding volunteers attended at least one training session in 2009 (67%, n=144).

**Table 2: Training Attendance**

	2009	2008	2007	2006 or earlier	Never
<b>Special Exhibits (n=80)</b>	44%	25%	8%	8%	16%
<b>Core Gallery (n=57)</b>	18%	35%	9%	14%	25%
<b>Museum-wide (n=60)</b>	43%	20%	8%	2%	27%
<b>Volunteer Potluck (n=58)</b>	43%	17%	3%	3%	33%

Volunteers were asked to rate the quality of the training sessions they attended in the past year (see Table 3). Three out of the four trainings were rated as “excellent” by half or more of volunteers, the exception being Core Gallery Training with a quarter of volunteers indicating the training was “excellent.” The number of respondents in this table is less than the previous table due to a lack of volunteer response to the question.

**Table 3: Overall Rating of Each Attended Training(s) in Past Year**

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
<b>Special Exhibits (n=67)</b>	0%	9%	42%	49%
<b>Core Gallery (n=37)</b>	5%	14%	54%	27%
<b>Museum-wide (n=37)</b>	3%	5%	35%	57%
<b>Volunteer Potluck (n=42)</b>	2%	10%	29%	60%

Volunteers shared how prepared they felt at fulfilling their duties as a result of participating in training(s) (see Table 4). More than 70% of the volunteers felt “prepared” about fulfilling their role as a volunteer after participating in trainings, and less than one tenth of the volunteers felt “somewhat unprepared” or “unprepared” after participating in training. In 2008, volunteers were asked one general preparedness question (rather than broken down by type of training). Compared to 2008, volunteers feel more prepared in all aspects of their work as a result of current trainings.

**Table 4: Preparedness Due to Each Training**

	Unprepared	Somewhat unprepared	Somewhat prepared	Prepared
<b>Special Exhibits (n=59)</b>	0%	5%	22%	73%
<b>Core Gallery (n=44)</b>	0%	9%	9%	82%
<b>Museum-wide (n=27)</b>	4%	0%	22%	74%
<b>Volunteer Potluck (n=24)</b>	4%	0%	13%	83%
<b>2008 responses (n=160)</b>	1%	6%	23%	70%

In order to understand why volunteers did not feel prepared after training, those who felt “unprepared or “somewhat unprepared” were asked what would have made them feel more prepared. Only six volunteers who had indicated they were somewhat unprepared supplied a comment on how they could have felt more prepared by the Special Exhibit and Core Gallery trainings.

**Ideas to Improve Preparedness**

*Special Exhibits Training (3)*

- For Special Exhibits Training I showed up, talked briefly to the staff member, talked to the exhibitor, checked with the other volunteers, and then knew somewhat what I was to do. Perhaps doing more of these special exhibits I'd feel more comfortable adapting.
- I never had worked in the museum before, or even been there, so everything was new and unknown. The information was good, but there was for me just not enough time to practice; I didn't know what to think of it.
- The training seemed rushed. I feel I learned on the job.

*Core Gallery Training (3)*

- An up to date manual should be provided to each volunteer in core galleries, giving background information on all exhibits in the gallery.
- Better designed and cared for activities.
- Over my 9+ years of volunteering the River Gallery offered minimal support. I was involved in an aquatic invertebrate exhibit that was mostly set up and maintained by myself. Although it was a very popular exhibit with parents and children, there seemed little interest in improving the exhibit as a whole.

**Volunteer Advisory Council**

Three fifths (60%) of volunteers indicated that they are aware of the Volunteer Advisory Council (VAC). Those volunteers aware of the VAC were asked in what ways it has supported their experience volunteering at the museum. Nearly half of the volunteers who know about VAC felt that their concerns and questions are supported by VAC. Other forms of VAC support were less frequently identified by volunteers (see Table 5).

**Table 5: Support Received from Volunteer Advisory Council (n=87\*)**

	<b>Percent</b>
<b>The VAC serves as a spokesperson for my questions, issues, and concerns.</b>	43%
<b>The feedback I have given the VAC has resulted in improvements in the volunteer program at SMM.</b>	17%
<b>Other:</b>	
<b>Some type of support from VAC.</b>	9%
<b>Served on VAC.</b>	7%
<b>No interaction with VAC.</b>	20%
<b>No support from VAC.</b>	7%

\*Some volunteers checked more than one option.

Volunteers were asked about what changes they have experienced due to the Volunteer Advisory Council. Half of the volunteers shared a response. These volunteers observed changes in communication, training and knowledge, volunteer equipment, general museum experience, and their overall volunteer experience due to VAC involvement. Examples of each theme are shared below. For a complete list of responses, see Appendix B.

**Changes Seen By Volunteers in the Past Two Years**

*15% (7) Volunteer equipment*

- Computers made available at volunteer site.
- New equipment (sponges) to replace the filthy ones. New signage.

*30% (14) Communication*

- We are more informed. We have more information to help visitors.
- Better communication between staff and volunteers.
- Communication seems more disconnected than in the past.

*11% (5) Training and knowledge*

- Gained additional knowledge.
- The past 2 years have afforded many opportunities to learn more about science, and the Museum and how it "works".

*19% (9) General museum experience*

- There has been a lot of turnover.
- As a group greeter, one of the improvements I've seen has been the increase/changes in signs assisting people in the right direction for various parts and levels of SMM.

*11% (5) Volunteer experience*

- More visits behind the scenes.
- Always has been positive.

**Volunteer Supervision**

Volunteers were asked about the supervision and support they received in the past year (see Table 6). Three fourths (76%) felt that they received “excellent” supervision and support from the volunteer department staff. Improvements could be made in the KAYSC as nearly one fifth

indicated poor supervision and support in this area, though this is expected as the KAYSC is a new area for the Volunteer Department. The Volunteer Department staff and Curators were rated similarly in 2009 and 2008. The proportion of volunteers rating the Gallery Program Supervisors and General Gallery/Exhibit Staff as “excellent” increased.

**Table 6: Ratings of Supervision and Support Received**

	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor	
	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008
<b>Volunteer Department staff (n=127)</b>	76%	78%	18%	16%	6%	6%	0%	0%
<b>Gallery Program Supervisors (n=78)</b>	60%	53%	28%	34%	9%	12%	3%	1%
<b>General Gallery/Exhibit Staff (n=74)</b>	62%	53%	30%	33%	7%	10%	1%	4%
<b>Curators (n=40)</b>	55%	55%	35%	25%	8%	11%	3%	9%
<b>KAYSC Staff (n=11)</b>	46%	N/A	36%	N/A	0%	N/A	18%	N/A

The volunteers were given space to share suggestions about how the supervision and support could be improved in these different areas. Less than half of the volunteers shared comments, and half of these were supportive or gave no feedback. A list of suggestions for improvement can be found in Appendix C; the same themes that were identified in 2008 were used to code the data here. Fewer of the major 2008 themes were identified as still being problems (see Table 7). The areas that remain problematic for volunteers are communication between volunteers and staff and also between different staff members, the lack of presence of staff on the floor, and trainings. Major shifts in suggestions resided in a change in the way volunteers and staff respectfully interact and the way in which the volunteers view themselves within the museum structure. Examples of comments are shared below.

***Suggestions for Improvement in Supervision (n=58\*)***

\*One volunteer gave more than one suggestion.

*19% (11) Be more interactive, communicative, engaging*

- Keep us better informed about changes in our area.
- Respond positively to requests for additional resources that the museum owns.
- More open and honest communication.

*19% (11) Be more present*

- More visible.
- Employ a gallery supervisor who has the time and the desire to keep up the gallery and its activities.
- Gallery supervisor rarely available for interaction. Little opportunity to critically interact with volunteer staff. Staff, in general, seems to be over-extended.

*2% (1) Paid staff respect of and interactions with volunteers*

- It's irritating when gallery supervisors come to talk when you're doing a cart activity and visitors can't access your activity as well.

9% (5) *Training Changes*

- Invite the staff to prepare more seriously for training.
- I think we have to improve the training. We suggested implementing a MENTORING Program.
- Special Exhibit Training above was marked as "somewhat prepared" because I never feel fully prepared until I've had several exposures out on the floor.

5% (3) *Other*

- I'm not sure how much time is spent on potlucks but if significant the time could probably be better spent on other support issues. There are several permanent exhibits that appear to be placed for little reason other than to fill space and have little if any relevance.

When compared between years, there are no significant differences for the volunteer department or curators. The differences in the gallery program supervisors and the general gallery staff lie only in the “excellent” and “good” ratings, showing that these two groups of staff are also seen as doing a good job; all supervision areas are doing very well with 90% or higher of staff giving approval ratings of “good” or “excellent.” The KAYSC is a new area of growth for the department, thus having more space to grow and much to learn in this new year, giving it a lower supervisory rating (82% at “good” or “excellent”).

***Table 7: Suggestions for Improvement***

	<b>2009 (n=58*)</b>	<b>2008 (n=96**)</b>
<b>Be more interactive, communicative, engaging</b>	19%	16%
<b>Be more present</b>	19%	16%
<b>Paid staff respect of and interaction with volunteers</b>	2%	13%
<b>Training changes</b>	9%	9%
<b>Improving volunteer area/objects</b>	0	7%
<b>Paid staff work ethic</b>	0	5%
<b>Incorporating volunteers more into museum</b>	0	3%
<b>Other</b>	5%	4%
<b>None or positive</b>	48%	36%

\*One volunteer supplied more than one suggestion.

\*\*Several volunteers gave more than one suggestion or varying forms of feedback.

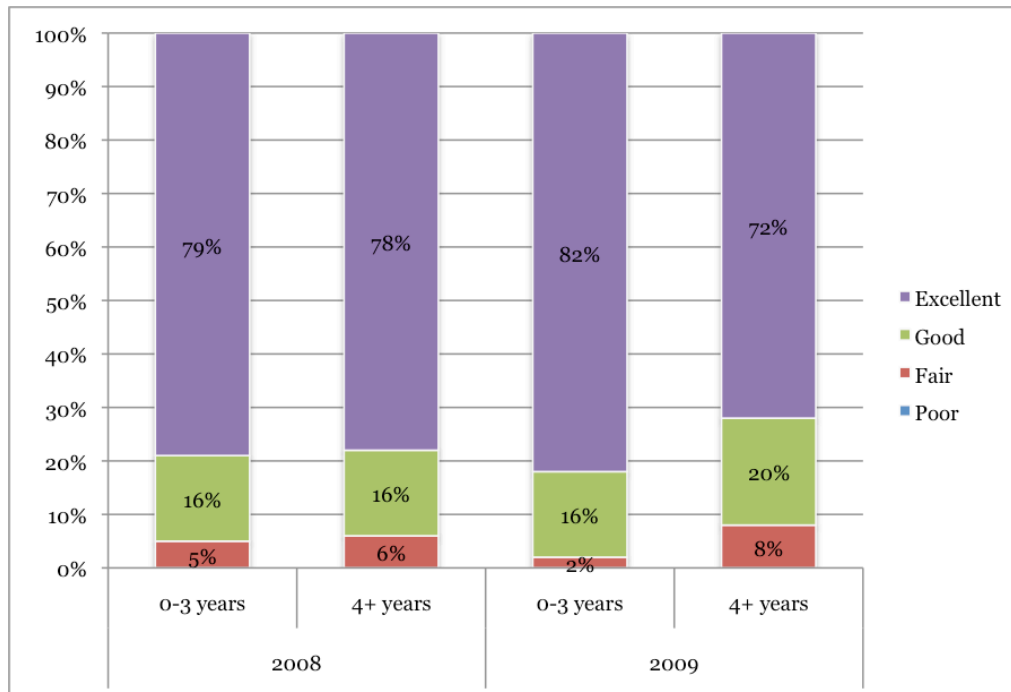
When comparing the ratings of different supervisors by how long volunteers have been working at SMM, the gallery program and general gallery staff were more negatively rated by seasoned volunteers than by volunteers who have been here for three years or less (see Table 8). In addition, changes have occurred in perceptions between 2008 and 2009 in both groups (see Figures 1-4). When separated by years of experience, the lower ratings still show that volunteers appreciate the supervision they receive. The difference between “good” and “excellent” ratings among 0-3 year volunteers and 4+ volunteers is not significant. The difference between these two groups is the rating of supervision as more “good” for 4+ year volunteers: 36% found program supervisors good whereas 16% of 0-3 year volunteers did.



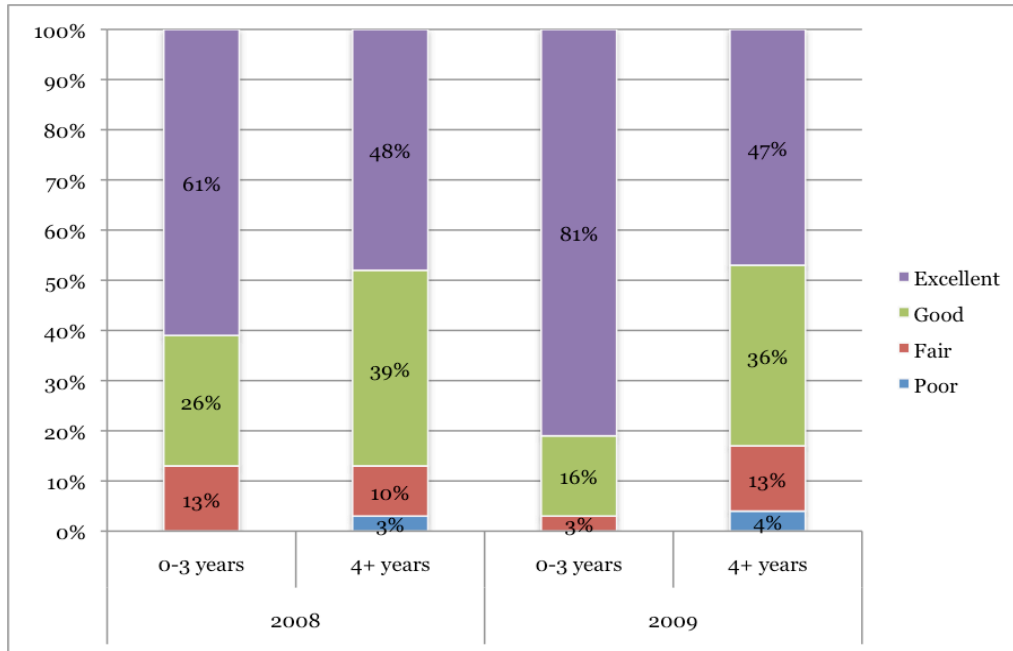
**Table 8: 2009 Supervision Ratings and Length of Volunteering**

	Volunteer Department Staff		Gallery Program Supervisors		General Gallery/ Exhibit Staff		Curators		KAYSC	
	0-3 Years (n= 45)	4 or More Years (n= 82)	0-3 Years (n=31)	4 or More Years (n=47)	0-3 Years (n=34)	4 or More Years (n=40)	0-3 Years (n=13)	4 or More Years (n=27)	0-3 Years (n=7)	4 or More Years (n=4)
<b>Excellent</b>	82%	72%	81%	47%	74%	53%	54%	57%	71%	0%
<b>Good</b>	16%	20%	16%	36%	26%	32%	39%	33%	29%	50%
<b>Fair</b>	2%	8%	3%	13%	0%	13%	7%	7%	0%	0%
<b>Poor</b>	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%	2%	0%	4%	0%	50%

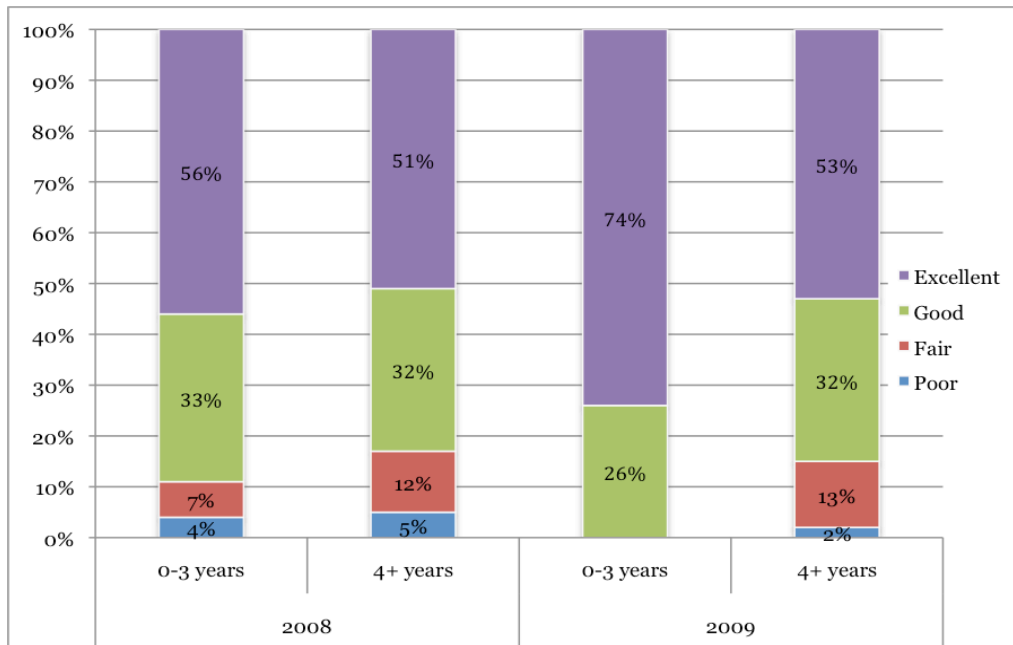
The shift between 2008 and 2009 shows that, nearly across the board, the “good” and “excellent” ratings have increased for each supervisory group. Both 0-3 and 4+ years of volunteering staff believe that their supervisory groups are doing a very good job. While the 4+ volunteers are rating supervisors as “good” more often than “excellent,” the areas needing attention are communication and visibility, two pieces that the department has been consistently working on.



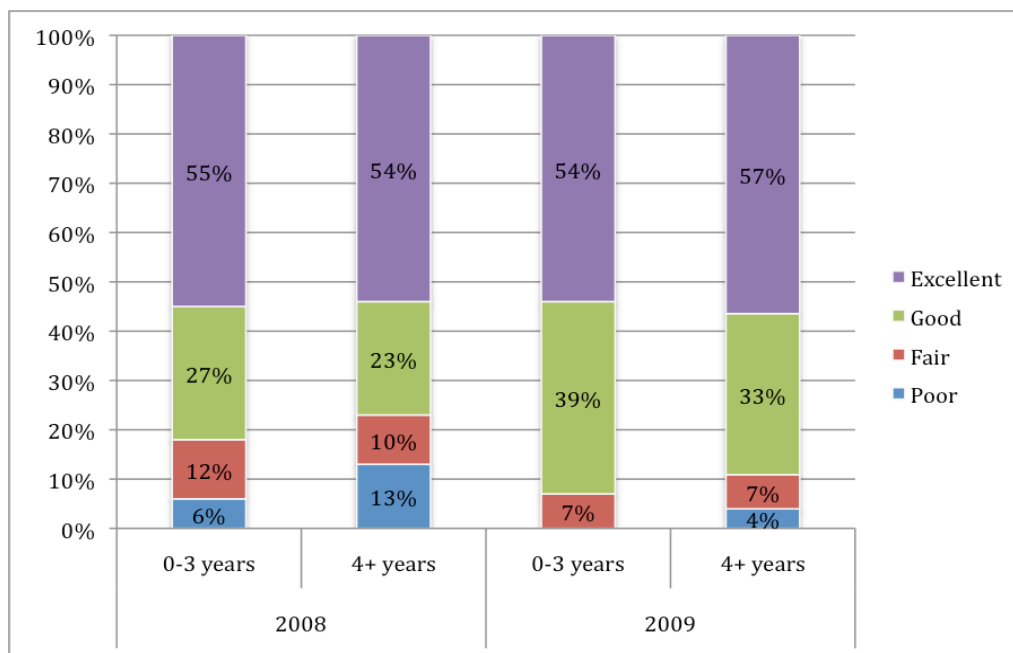
**Figure 1: 2008 and '09 rates of supervision for the Volunteer Department Staff**



**Figure 2: 2008 and '09 rates of supervision for the Gallery Program Supervisors**



**Figure 3: 2008 and '09 rates of supervision for the General Gallery Supervisors**



**Figure 4: 2008 and '09 rates of supervision for the Curators**

### Role in Museum

Volunteers were asked about their involvement in the museum. Nearly all (97%) recognized how their work was important to the museum's mission. In addition, volunteers were asked for ideas of how to support the museum's efforts while also being cost effective. Nearly a third (29%) of the volunteers responding could not come up with any ideas, but others thought of ideas ranging from using computer technology more and comments about the exhibits being eliminated, created, or brought in to reducing paid staff hours and increasing the use of volunteers (see Table 9). See Appendix D for a full list of responses.

**Table 9: Ideas to reduce SMM costs (n=52)**

	Percent
<b>Exhibits</b>	17%
<b>Reduce hours and staff</b>	10%
<b>Use of volunteers</b>	8%
<b>Feedback and communication</b>	7%
<b>Computers</b>	6%
<b>Corporate sponsors</b>	6%
<b>Signage</b>	4%
<b>Training</b>	4%
<b>Other</b>	10%
<b>None</b>	29%

Volunteers were also asked to share any suggestions they had to reduce the costs of the Volunteer Department (see Appendix E). Similar suggestions were shared as in the question

above, but more attention was paid to the use of communicating through email, volunteer recognition, and training (see Table 10). A third again had no suggestions (29%).

***Table 10: Reducing Volunteer Department costs***

	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Volunteer recognition</b>	19%
<b>Electronic communication</b>	15%
<b>Reduce staff</b>	9%
<b>Training</b>	7%
<b>Other</b>	15%
<b>None</b>	29%

Volunteers were asked the likelihood that they would recommend volunteering at SMM to others (see Table 11). Most of the volunteers (88%) said they were likely or very likely to recommend SMM as a place to volunteer while only 6% said they were unlikely. These ratings are similar to the previous two volunteer surveys.

***Table 11: Likelihood of Recommending SMM to Potential Volunteers***

	<b>2009 (n=133)</b>	<b>2008 (n=197)</b>	<b>2007 (n=213)</b>
<b>Very likely</b>	57%	54%	56%
<b>Likely</b>	31%	30%	30%
<b>Somewhat likely</b>	8%	10%	8%
<b>Somewhat unlikely</b>	0%	2%	1%
<b>Unlikely</b>	1%	0%	1%
<b>Very unlikely</b>	5%	4%	6%

### **Final Comments**

At the end of the survey, volunteers were given space to provide final comments. Half of the volunteers shared comments. All statements are listed and categorized by theme in Appendix F. Volunteers provided praise for their volunteer experience as well as suggestions for improvement. The major themes that came up through volunteers' comments were about their experience, flexibility, learning experiences, paid staff, training, exhibits, signage, and communication. In 2008, paid staff and training themes also arose, along with some museum-wide changes, "volunteering specifics," and wishing to be incorporated into the museum more.

**Table 12: Final comments (n=75)**

	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Volunteer experience</b>	48%
<b>Paid staff</b>	23%
<b>Communication</b>	13%
<b>Training</b>	5%
<b>Exhibits</b>	4%
<b>Learning</b>	4%
<b>Flexibility</b>	3%
<b>Other</b>	9%

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Overall, volunteers indicated they had a good or exceptional volunteer experience, although the proportion indicating exceptional has decreased over the past three years. Recurring themes among volunteer comments were communication, interaction with paid staff, and training. Volunteers indicated they felt prepared due to the trainings they have attended, but perhaps trainings could be offered more often than annually to give volunteers ample opportunity to attend. The communication between volunteers and paid staff has improved over the years but can continue to be improved. The supervision and support volunteers received from staff was almost always rated as good or excellent, except for the staff in the KAYSC which received lower ratings. Efforts should continue to be made to recruit younger volunteers, retain short-tenured volunteers, and volunteers with diverse ethnic backgrounds.

Finally, volunteers have a lot of ideas about how to improve the museum or become more incorporated with its mission and activities. Giving volunteers time and space to speak with developers, programmers, directors, and other staff who can cause changes due to new ideas would be both beneficial for the museum and for volunteer morale.

## Volunteer Information

After sharing information about the program, volunteers shared information about themselves. The highest proportion (46%) of volunteers worked in the core galleries (see Table 13). Some of the other areas where volunteers held positions include the Kitty Anderson Youth Science Center, lobby/Senior Tuesday greeters, and the archaeology lab.

***Table 13: Volunteer Positions Held in Past Year (n=144\*)***

	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Core Galleries</b>	46%
<b>Special/Temporary Exhibits</b>	29%
<b>Special Events</b>	26%
<b>Other</b>	18%
<b>Information Booth</b>	11%
<b>Behind the Scenes</b>	10%
<b>School Group Greeter</b>	8%
<b>Clerical Support</b>	5%

\*Some volunteers checked more than one area.

Half (49%) of the responding volunteers have been at the museum for seven years or less (see Table 14). The number of new volunteers (less than a year) dropped significantly from 2008 while the percentage of volunteers indicating 1-3 years remained the same as 2008.

***Table 14: Length of Volunteering at SMM***

	<b>2009 (n=144)</b>	<b>2008 (n=220)</b>	<b>2007 (n=220)</b>
<b>Less than a year</b>	17%	28%	20%
<b>1-3 years</b>	19%	18%	13%
<b>4-7 years</b>	13%	13%	30%
<b>8-10 years</b>	23%	17%	10%
<b>11-15 years</b>	10%	13%	12%
<b>16-20 years</b>	7%	5%	5%
<b>21-30 years</b>	6%	5%	8%
<b>More than 30 years</b>	5%	2%	3%

Two fifths (40%) of volunteers are 70 years of age or older while only 5% are 21 or younger (see Table 15). The connection with the KAYS was new this past year, which is where the volunteers under the age of 18 are from. As the volunteers continue to age, an effort will need to be made to recruit younger volunteers.

**Table 15: Age (n=143)**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>
<b>Under 18</b>	4%	0
<b>18-21</b>	1%	7%
<b>22-29</b>	9%	10%
<b>30-39</b>	2%	5%
<b>40-49</b>	6%	4%
<b>50-59</b>	16%	17%
<b>60-69</b>	21%	22%
<b>70-79</b>	29%	25%
<b>80-89</b>	10%	7%
<b>90+</b>	1%	0

The proportion of males and females represented in this year's survey remained constant from 2008 (see Table 16).

**Table 16: Gender**

	<b>2009 (n=132)</b>	<b>2008 (n=196)</b>	<b>2007 (n=204)</b>
<b>Male</b>	45%	46%	43%
<b>Female</b>	55%	54%	57%

The education level of volunteers is similar to the two previous studies, although the proportion of volunteers with a graduate degree has increased while the number of volunteers in college decreased (see Table 17).

**Table 17: Education Level**

	<b>2009 (n=132)</b>	<b>2008 (n=198)</b>	<b>2007 (n=211)</b>
<b>Less than high school</b>	2%	3%	0%
<b>Complete high school</b>	7%	6%	7%
<b>Some college/Tech Ed</b>	14%	16%	19%
<b>College degree</b>	39%	39%	40%
<b>Graduate degree</b>	33%	28%	25%
<b>Doctorate</b>	7%	8%	9%

The vast majority of volunteers identify as white, but an increase in volunteers from other ethnic backgrounds has taken place over the past two years (see Table 18). Diversifying the volunteer base is a core goal of the volunteer department. This data shows that of the volunteers responding to the survey have become more diverse since 2007.

**Table 18: Ethnicity**

	<b>2009 (n=131*)</b>	<b>2008 (n=201)</b>	<b>2007 (n=174)</b>
<b>White</b>	83%	89%	94%
<b>Asian</b>	6%	6%	2%
<b>African American</b>	3%	1%	0%
<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>	2%	1%	0%
<b>Native American</b>	1%	1%	0%
<b>Other</b>	1%	2%	4%

\*Some volunteers checked more than one area.



## **Appendix A: Explanations for overall volunteer experience rating (n=133)**

### *1% (1) Poor*

- I had a personal problem with the museum offering a prayer room last October when Muslim people from Somalia were given a prayer room at the end of Ramadan. No one could give me a straight answer as to why this was done, while Jews and Christians are not afforded the same opportunity. Did you see a special prayer room this year on Good Friday for Christians to use, or Jewish people at Passover? When I asked if a prayer room would be made available for Muslims this coming October, I waited patiently, but received no reply. Therefore I resigned.

### *5% (6) Fair*

#### *Training sessions*

- There seems to be a lack of direction to the volunteer program this past year. Training has been sporadic and not well planned. Much time is lost by untimely starting times. The museum staff does not appear to be well prepared.

#### *Support and communication*

- 1) The degradation of the volunteer activities and materials. This has been going on for years and now the situation has become acute. 2) Lack of action on the part of volunteer office staff and museum management to address issue #1. Glaciers move faster. 3) Lack of honest communication with some of the volunteer office staff and museum management. Honestly, does the lunch conversation in VHQ really need to be censored? Also, in the past year there has been an over-reliance on "dialogue" and "providing context." Meanwhile, management does a great job of "hearing our concerns" while neglecting to listen. When did open and honest communication become politically incorrect? 4) Hitting up the volunteers for monetary donations to the museum. I guess my time and expertise aren't worth as much as they were in the past. Also, the "everyone else is doing it" has a hollow ring to it.
- Overall, less support for volunteers (e.g. lack of training update sessions, reduced resources in Dinosaurs and Fossils Gallery). There is more emphasis on paid staff stage presentations, some of which are very loud and make it difficult for volunteers to hear and converse with visitors; those loud presentations should be held in a theater. Special exhibits are too much history (e.g. Pompeii and Titanic) and entertainment, and not enough science. How about Body World II? Dinosaurs and Fossils is overdue for another dinosaur traveling exhibit.

#### *Volunteer experience*

- An important factor in the volunteer experience is working with the other volunteers. I prefer to try new activities, most volunteers want to demonstrate the same activity over and over, and will consider changing activities.
- It's something new for me, so that's a good experience, but the things I tell the people are too childish. I have a difficult time to contact older people.
- Schedule-wise it is difficult to volunteer. It requires a time commitment that I do not always feel capable of filing.

### *50% (67) Good*

#### *Support and communication*

- Always an honor to represent the museum to our visitors. We have fairly good communication to the staff.
- Because of no e-mail, I am not informed of some special events for volunteers.

### *Paid staff*

- Staff is good to work with and always make me feel appreciated.
- People are friendly (both staff and other volunteers). Staff tries to make it convenient for me to volunteer at the times of my preference. I am always thanked for coming in to volunteer.
- I have met many lovely people at the SMM. They are kind, interested in their work, respect me and others, and make me interested in working at the SMM.
- Members of the department were friendly and congenial. Had good rapport with supervisor. Leaders in Volunteer headquarters were exceptionally helpful and efficient.
- Science Museum staff is welcoming and express appreciation for the work the volunteers perform. Volunteers are made to feel a part of the team we are working with.
- Sometimes I feel the Museum thinks volunteers are stupid and "need" protecting. Also sometimes I think the Museum thinks we have nothing else to do but volunteer there. Otherwise all is good.
- As a volunteer in the Information Booth on Friday evenings, I have little or no record of the names of the VRM's or other personnel. It would be helpful if I could read their badges, which are always hanging below the waist and find it impossible to see their name. Most are not very friendly, only interested in interacting with each other.
- Congenial staff and volunteers.
- Staff working the exhibit were friendly and helpful.
- The supervisors always checked in with me to make sure that I had what I needed.
- Volunteer staff are very friendly and appreciative.

### *Experience with visitors*

- Enjoy interacting with people attending SMM.
- I enjoy interacting with children and adult visitors. I am concerned about the loss of an excellent volunteer who was upset the way an event was handled with religious overtones.
- I always look forward to my volunteer shift. I get as much from the experience as I think I give museum visitors.
- There doesn't seem to be discipline to students from teachers and chaperones. Sometimes it seems more like police work than education.
- It is so enjoyable talking to an enthusiastic child when they bring items to the Collector's Corner.
- Meeting and interacting with people is the primary reason for my volunteering.
- The exhibit I worked on was well received by the public.
- Fun people to work with; enjoy meeting the visitors, especially the children.
- The opportunities to interact with museum visitors, particularly children, continues to be very enjoyable. However, the Collections Area has been negatively affected by the "restructuring", and space requirements of special exhibits.
- Meet a lot of interesting kids and adults. Interaction with them is great.
- I enjoy meeting people, including students, and explaining things to them. It is also a learning experience.
- Speaking with people and about health. I enjoy the school children.
- I have met many wonderful visitors, especially great children. I think I've learned as much from the visitors as they have learned from me.
- I enjoyed spending time with visitors at my station.
- I really enjoyed interacting with visitors and enhancing their visit.

### *Training sessions*

- I learned a lot from the informational training sessions.
- I say good because I didn't do what I was suppose to do, and I sometimes didn't pay attention, but I knew what was going on.
- It was my first year volunteering and it was easy to jump right in with the training provided.

- I feel I had good training and was well prepared to man one of the carts in the CSI exhibit.
- Good training, excellent facilities.
- I enjoyed the experience and felt that I also provided meaningful support for the Science Museum. It could have been more enjoyable if I had been trained in more experiments.

#### *Volunteer experience*

- Good environment. Am appreciated for my time. Enjoy fellow volunteers.
- Minor changes in rule enactment/enforcement (particularly with regard to supervision/security) have proven somewhat more restrictive and/or inconvenient for some volunteers.
- I was not able to volunteer as much as I'd like, or it would have been exceptional.
- I like my colleagues, both volunteer and staff. The SMM is a happening place! Volunteers are happy to save the museum \$1 million a year in exchange for free parking and one nice dinner. Sometimes volunteers are overbooked and end up feeling redundant.
- I enjoy the staff that I work with as well as the other volunteers. There is always a lot of activity where I volunteer.
- I enjoy the work I am doing.
- I feel I am providing a meaningful service to the visitors. Also I feel appreciated by the staff.
- Haven't been able to get in as much as I would have liked. Wish I could have produced more.
- Volunteering met my expectations, and if I am able to train for special exhibits in the future, I am looking forward to an exceptional experience.
- I enjoy working with the other volunteers in the cell lab and working with the children and parents who visit us.
- I am only there as a substitute so I am not there on a regular basis.
- First time volunteering at SMM.
- Most weeks my assignments offered some challenge, but not all.
- I work in Cell Lab and I feel good about using my skills to help kids who come to the lab.
- I've been spending much of the year in Costa Rica, so my involvement as a volunteer is less than in earlier years.
- I always enjoy my days in the Cell Lab. It is always an amazing experience!
- I am volunteering in Collections and the volunteer office - time spent there has been positive. I have missed some days because of other commitments. The collections gallery is getting very limited as more space is taken away for special events. I have not attended extra events because of the 25-mile drive or because of other commitments - especially on Thursdays.
- So much depends on how much you put in. The more you put in the more you will get out of the experience as a volunteer. That being said, I think more of the creative aspects of volunteers with rich life experiences could be brought out in the planning and execution of exhibits.
- Clean, friendly environment; lack of micro-management and lack of petty rules.
- I almost always enjoy learning new things at SMM and passing on the stuff I think is fun (I tend to like being a know-it-all). I would have rated it exceptional except sometimes there are annoying visitors (very seldom) and sometimes I just feel like I don't want to deal with people that day for various reasons (very occasionally I call in for a mental health day off).
- I love volunteering. I don't like being kept track of like you are expecting me to cheat. I don't like having to troop up to Volunteer Headquarters to punch in and out.
- It is always a good experience in the information booth.
- My experience is that after doing an activity for more than ten years I find it less stimulating.
- I had fun and I liked my supervisor a lot.
- It was a relaxing and friendly environment.
- I loved the experience, but I never got an accurate count of the hours I volunteered.
- Enjoyed working in CSI exhibit.

- My experience was very good. Since this year's experience was about the same as several years previously, it could not be called exceptional.
- Just wish it had been busier on Information Desk.
- A-OK. Good volunteers to work with.
- I'm just happy to be there every Tuesday. My fellow volunteer and I work well together.
- Working with interesting friends.
- With exceptional there would be no need for improvement, and there always is.

#### *44% (59) Exceptional*

##### *Support and communication*

- The Science Museum of Minnesota has clearly made an effort to support its volunteers. There is a great sense of community among volunteers of all ages and backgrounds; it has been a wonderful experience for me.
- Good organization of volunteer communications and staff support, as well as fantastic volunteer opportunities.
- Stress free, only depend on my time is what I actually volunteer for. Full time staff are easy to work with and very supportive.
- Good support from the office and appreciation shown from floor staff and office for work I did. "Thanks" goes a long way with me.
- No problems, everyone is appreciative of my help. I know I am making a difference.
- We have good assignments, and have good materials for demonstrations.
- The learning return for me matches what I need to do to match expectations for me as a Special Exhibits volunteer. I feel part of the SMM, although being a night volunteer; I'm out of the info loop unless I receive updates by mail (thank you Healthier and Linda!!).
- Everything was always organized and the staff was great. It was a fun place to volunteer.
- I feel that I have a lot of support and respect from all staff at the museum. I enjoy my time there.
- Support and training are excellent and my supervisors and the volunteer staff always say thanks - I feel like my work matters.
- Communication, experience with visitors.
- Very refreshing-cooperative and respond to suggestions.
- I got everything needing to do my job.

##### *Paid staff*

- I work with a couple of great guys (Ross and Rod) in the bus reception area. This year we have had an exceptional staff member, Jose, working with us.
- Staff is friendly, visitors are easy to deal with, and it is generally a good experience.
- I enjoy working with the Exhibit Shop Maintenance group personnel and doing the type of work that requires machining metals, plastics, and wood.
- SMM staff is always very helpful and pleasant to work with.
- 1-The supervisors are knowledgeable and helpful. 2-The volunteer headquarter staff are welcoming, helpful and answer my concerns in a very friendly way. 3-Above all the SMM is a very respectful place.
- A chance to meet and work with George and Jose.
- My floor supervisors have been exceptional. Can't say enough about the staff I've worked with on Saturday nights. They take care of me as a volunteer, as well as all visitors. It's a win-win experience for all of us.
- 1. The leadership qualities of Volunteer Headquarter staff and other SMM staff. 2. Affirmations, encouragement, recognitions given by the above.

### *Training sessions*

- I have been trained. I have access to help. I have felt welcome, and I feel I am in a life-long learning environment.
- I have had lots of help and good training.

### *Experiences with visitors*

- I believe that visitors remember more and are happier when they have personal contact with museum staff and/or volunteers. On personal level I like to learn new stuff and talk to the people.
- I have more participants in terms of students coming in groups and students coming with their parents. Was exceptional for the reactions of understanding and fulfillment they demonstrated.
- Great young people to work with.
- Most of the time I have fun and get satisfaction from the fact that the visitors are also having fun.
- I enjoy meeting with people and getting input from them. I also enjoy imparting some of the knowledge that I learn in the training sessions.
- I say exceptional because I am at heart a History person, and I get to tell people about ancient Egypt, sometimes Greece, and even Rome. The Mummy gives me opportunity to talk about our most long-lived civilization, and the reason for its persistence for 3500 years. Stuff that's intriguing to me, though perhaps not as much to others.
- Very simply, I enjoy volunteering at SMM and like to meet and greet the variety of school groups and ages.
- It is interesting to meet people and talk to them about the exhibits they have grown to expect as informative and interesting.
- I use a Black Bear skin and a wolf skin. I enjoy telling the children (all ages) about the bear and wolf skins. They can touch the skins and their skulls.
- I enjoy the kids that come to the Collection Corner-five year olds knowing so much boggles my mind!
- Visitors are generally interested in what is being presented and it's fun to guide them as they explore the experiments.
- The visitors- some of them- are appreciating my explanations to them.

### *Volunteer experience*

- As a Research Associate, I work in the entomology collection as an Adjunct Curator. It is one of the things that I enjoy most in life - always on a steep learning curve. I also spend many hours at home preparing and labeling and identifying specimens, so my hours are flexible and include field time conducting insect surveys, doing identification work for other museums and organizations, leading butterfly walks, etc.
- Working with a dedicated group of people that enjoy what they are doing and encourage the others in their volunteer activities as well.
- I enjoy coming to the Science Museum each week to volunteer with friendly people.
- A great opportunity to combine volunteering, education (both receiving and giving), and people interaction. On top of that, access to a world-class museum.
- I love my volunteer office work.
- I have the luxury of doing all kinds of things, so that I never get bored. I can work with visitors, with staff, and do research.
- Every week I enjoy myself, learn something new and meet great people.
- Everything works out very smoothly with my volunteer experience. I work with wonderful people. I am not able to [do so] much right now (not many hours) so I appreciate the chance to help out at a level which "works" for my life. Everyone at SMM, volunteers and staff, guests, all make it special.

- I have had a great experience working as a volunteer at SMM. I appreciate being treated with the same amount of respect and responsibility as a paid staff member. As an Americorps volunteer, and someone who also manages a youth volunteer group at the museum I can really appreciate the volunteer department's philosophy on valuing the work that its members do. I have always felt like my opinions and my work was taken seriously and I have worked to pass that philosophy on to the youth I work with.
- The people we interact with (staff and fellow volunteers) always are informative and congenial. We have developed many friendships over the years. I also appreciate the brown bag lunch hours with a speaker, and the pot lucks (evening) with a speaker. Very educational and FUN (and tasty. Does that count?).
- I have been volunteering as a trail guide at Warner Nature Center. It has been a very rewarding experience.
- I had a great time, and learned a lot about water.
- Overall, my experience at SMM has been very enjoyable, it has allowed me to connect and help educate the community with this job, my own knowledge has increased ever since I took this job, and overall the experience has been well worth it.
- I've met great people and learned new things in a cool environment. How can it not be exceptional?
- It's something I can do at home and on my time and it's helpful to the SMM.
- The quality of the exhibits and availability of hours were great.
- It is great being at the Science Museum and helping others to enjoy it. All the employees and other volunteers are always positive.
- The educational opportunities and the work environment are second to none. I had a great time volunteering.
- It's fun to work there.
- At my age, I feel I am useful and the people I work with are great.
- I enjoy the interaction with other volunteers and the museum public.
- Great times, great people.
- 1. Stimulating interaction with other volunteers. 2. Being able to promote and support a education venue - one of my primary values. 3. Being an ambassador of the SMM and serving the community in a top rated institution.
- We "work" with vital people who are interested in learning, and we know we are appreciated by SMM for our volunteering.

## **Appendix B: Changes in volunteer experience due to VAC (n=47)**

### *30% (14) Communication*

- A better relation between Staff and Volunteers, although it has to be reinforced.
- Linda and Heather are very open to hearing comments and being interested in the work I do at/for SMM. There seems to be more interest in what we do accomplish.
- There is more information going from staff to volunteer. Concerns are addressed and improvements made where possible, and reasons given where impossible.
- Better communication between staff and volunteers.
- Better communication with office.
- Communication seems more disconnected than in the past.
- Have heard of changes from comments of others and hearing what the board does they seem to respond.
- No answers to questions asked of volunteer representatives.
- Not too much. There seems to be a decrease in feedback from the VAC board to the volunteers.
- Outreach. Email has been the link I depend on for information. If I have any questions, I can scoot them off and will get a timely response, if not an immediate response. I wish there were such an email link with the VAC--which may already be the case. As mentioned, I'm a bit out of the loop.
- People respond to all suggestions.
- We are cut off from the patio lab and not given information about their work. We have asked for replacement of lost artifacts and get no results.
- We are more informed. We have more information to help visitors.
- We get a lot of notices in our e-mail, to keep up with what is going on within the WHQ.

### *19% (9) General museum experience*

- As a group greeter, one of the improvements I've seen has been the increase/changes in signs assisting people in the right direction for various parts and levels of SMM.
- Not positive on the whole--too much emphasis on making money from special exhibits, not enough on science; while nanotechnology is important, so are other areas emphasized in galleries.
- Rugs put in school entrance area, minor changes made in school group entrance area and repairs done.
- There has been a lot of turn over.
- When I was on the advisory council, changes were mostly in Cell Lab, where I used to volunteer. At the time, they were using the cell lab sink to wash hands after participating in an activity in the human body hall. It created a true havoc for us and I believe they do not do that any more.
- The change I have not seen is progress toward securing the long-term future of Paleontology by replacing Kristy Rogers.
- Knowledge of museum, the gallery experience.
- I work in Cell Lab and now there is a staff person there most of the time.
- SMM member frustrations, re parking discount - waiting in long box office lines has been addressed.

### *15% (7) Volunteer Equipment*

- Always more paper work and record keeping than seems necessary.
- Computers made available at volunteer site.
- Elimination of \$1 comp fee computerized sign in/out.

- New equipment (sponges) to replace the filthy ones. New signage.
- Recording volunteer hours using computer.
- The new sign-in stuff, the erosion of the Collections Gallery.
- Use of Computer in Information Booth and volunteer sign up area.

*11% (5) Volunteer experience*

- Always has been positive.
- More opportunities to participate in various activities available to museum staff.
- More visits behind the scenes.
- The longer you work the exhibit, the more people you meet and get input from many through their own experiences.
- The volunteer activities are getting simpler and do not have the scientific "meat" we had.

*11% (5) Training and knowledge*

- Training is less effective. Some volunteers are not happy with so many new initiatives which are not well thought out. Staff seems to be doing too many things at once resulting in low quality results.
- Gained additional knowledge.
- Considerations and effort is being made for ongoing volunteer refresher and update training.
- Some changes due to new leader. Lots of "stuff" to attend at unreasonable times ... Apparently suggestions from VAC are not considered.
- The past two years have afforded many opportunities to learn more about science, and the Museum and how it "works".

*17% (8) None*

- Can't think of any.
- I don't understand the question. Changes where VAC? Museum? If museum, they are cutting too many corners on front line staff.
- In the Mississippi River Gallery where I was a volunteer very little.
- In what?
- None
- None. Since I left my position on the Council, I have no idea what they are doing. I am unaware of their current activities.
- Not applicable.
- Not aware much of the work of the VAC.



## Appendix C: Supervision improvements (n=58\*)

\*One volunteer gave more than one suggestion.

### 19% (11) *Be more interactive, communicative, engaging*

- Keep us better informed about changes in our area.
- Respond positively to requests for additional resources that the museum owns.
- More open and honest communication.
- Key management persons from the operations dept., i.e. Ellen, Mike, and team leaders have taken time and shown interest in how we are doing and listen to our recommendations. The same is true of the VRS and their leader, Richard. Communication is being improved, as are the responses to issues.
- I am not familiar with the Supervisory Groups. Perhaps an organization chart can be displaced in the Volunteer Department.
- I think a more clear understanding of roles and responsibilities between groups would be helpful. I'm also a little surprised that after nearly two years I really don't know any of the curators! I did attend at least one lecture about conservation of brasses ... but we don't see much of that part of the museum's staff.
- With three staff, there should be someone in the office during each workday. Some days there is none. There should be better communication between Heather and Linda. We report to Linda but most of our e-mails come from Heather.
- All did well... In general, I think ONE on ONE interaction is always helpful...check to see if any questions/needs/give feedback. One suggestion...perhaps introduce to other volunteers during times such as lunch to help facilitate integration into the long-term cohesive group in place.
- By keeping us informed when changes take place—sometimes we hear about it from another volunteer.
- I always have to ask, “What’s new?” when starting my shift. If I don’t ask, I might not find out. Couldn’t the supervisor just get into the habit of informing us of changes, additions, etc. automatically, as we come on the floor?
- It would have helped if anyone would have sat down to talk about the exhibit and find out what made it popular and how the museum could have added support.

### 19% (11) *Be more present*

- More visible.
- Employ a gallery supervisor who has the time and the desire to keep up the gallery and its activities.
- Personally, I believe they have done a very good job. In my book, supervision is to be used when needed, but, for the most part, we as volunteers should know what to do and where to go. That is what training is for. Therefore to expect the gallery/floor personnel to "supervise" us is asking them to do our job. Whenever I have asked questions they have always been gracious and helpful.
- Gallery supervisor rarely available for interaction. Little opportunity to critically interact with volunteer staff. Staff, in general, seems to be over-extended.
- I do not really see the curators at the Dino and fossils gallery. They do not interact on a week-to-week or daily basis with the volunteers in my position. They do okay with workshops, however.
- I feel that even though I come in every week I have never met the program supervisor of my area. I believe I would feel more appreciated if she knew me by name.
- Some gallery program supervisors are also working on special exhibits. This takes a lot of their time, and therefore the gallery is being neglected. Maybe a gallery assistant could take over some of the day-to-day gallery responsibility.

- Sometimes do not know who they are.
- Spend more time on the floor ... What are they always busy with ... Do they have too many galleries to care for????????????????? Feeling of security if a supervisor is around a little more.
- We need to have the gallery supervisors in the gallery supporting the volunteers to a greater degree than they do now. They are so busy taking care of their chunks of Special Exhibit and preparing for the next Special Exhibit plus doing the other side tasks that they have little time to spend with the volunteers, reinforcing them and answering questions.
- No idea, I don't know them well enough.

*2% (1) Paid staff respect of and interactions with volunteers*

- It's irritating when gallery supervisors come to talk when you're doing a cart activity and visitors can't access your activity as well.

*9% (5) Training Changes*

- Invite the staff to prepare more seriously for training.
- I think we have to improve the training. We suggested implementing a MENTORING Program.
- Without a replacement for Kristy Curry Rogers, Bruce Erickson or other well-qualified persons should hold Dinosaurs and Fossils Gallery training sessions and interact with volunteers to keep them updated and improve their ability to enhance the experience of SMM visitors.
- Training for the experimental gallery occurs about twice per year. I'm not sure how the experiments and dates are selected. If a volunteer happens to be unavailable for a particular date or would prefer training in alternative experiments they are "out of luck."
- Special Exhibit Training above was marked as "somewhat prepared" because I never feel fully prepared until I've had several exposures out on the floor.

*5% (3) Other*

- I'm not sure how much time is spent on potlucks but if significant the time could probably be better spent on other support issues. There are several permanent exhibits that appear to be placed for little reason other than to fill space and have little if any relevance.
- It is hard to answer these, as I am a former employee, so some of what I do I was trained for before starting to volunteer.
- Never that. Perhaps a suggestion that volunteers love to learn. Otherwise, many of the regulars would not be at the SMM. Any time any staff has a grand idea for sharing a piece of knowledge or viewpoint that makes us open our eyes and say "whoa, hadn't looked at it that way" is a bonus for us volunteers and helps us bond to the mission of the museum. It's a life-long pursuit. Add up the hours and passion for the subject in return. Thank you all!!!

*48% (28) None or Positive*

- ? [2]
- A-OK.
- Can't think of anything. [2]
- Have no suggestions.
- Heather has answered my questions on sewing projects as needed. She has made it easy to pick up items to be repaired. Can't think of how she could improve.
- I appreciate that they check occasionally.
- I cannot think of one, but will let you know.
- I can't say that I have had any issues with anyone (for the most part).
- I think Heather did a great job.

- I think the communication from the volunteer office has been great, although there have been less emails (which I like). I have always been able to get information when I need it.
- Keep the good work as it is right now.
- Linda and Heather [are] very helpful and understanding of old guys who don't always get it the first time. Kate is a treasure!
- N/A.
- nc.
- No comment.
- None. [2]
- No need.
- None. Everything excellent.
- Our staff people did an excellent job. Jose, Mark, Mike.
- They are all very good. No complaints.
- They do a great job.
- Volunteer department staff are excellent. They are true facilitators and work well with volunteers.
- You are doing a great job. You actually listen to us.
- The volunteer staff and ACEC staff did an excellent job of directing my efforts in their departments.
- Saying "Thanks" is the best way to have us feel we're appreciated, and my experience is that they always do it.

## **Appendix D: Suggestions for reducing cost while supporting the visitor experience (n=52)**

### *17% (9) Exhibits*

- Be wary of eliminating "permanent" exhibits to make room for "temporary" special exhibits. Teachers often have work sheets for students - confusion results when objects are no longer displayed.
- I think that the permanent exhibits on the second level could use some interpretation. Most people just seem to wander through without understanding or taking the time to read the explanations.
- In the long run it would save money to include maintenance people in decisions on building decor and exhibit components. For example, the bases for the dinosaurs could have been carpeted rather than a solid black surface that always shows dust and spills and can't be cleaned with normal cleaning solutions.
- It is truly a shame that the collector's gallery is all but being eliminated. There are many exhibits in storage that should be brought out and rotated periodically. Perhaps it is time to remove the Hmong house to allow for a change in exhibits and room to put them.
- One or two quality things per volunteer cart compared to five or so so-so demos.
- Open up the visible labs again. I have heard from people that watching preparation of exhibits was a valuable part of the museum experience.
- Put more stuff from the collections on public display. There is so much unused space at SMM.
- There is so much in the collections storage; lets make an effort to display more of it. How much does it cost to have it displayed? We have the cases and personnel to set it up - labels could be done with computers.
- Also, keep bringing in the big exhibits. Titanic is breathtaking. Thank you.

### *10% (5) Reduce hours and staff*

- I'm thinking you have cut all you can cut, except maybe cutting some hours before Titanic.
- Reduce paid staff by having volunteers be responsible for their duties. This would require the more committed volunteer in terms of time and leadership ability but there would be some that could and would do this. This would also require a higher respect of the volunteer abilities by the staff.
- Reduce staff and volunteer time at 4 pm, when closing at 5 pm, to half.
- Utilizing some volunteer advanced skills to reduce staff and hired help. A more detailed assessment and cataloging of regular volunteer skills would be required.
- Reduce administrative costs.

### *8% (4) Use of volunteers*

- Give back some of the authority you have taken from the volunteers to help with visitors.
- Have a volunteer or two in the lobby to greet visitors and either try to answer questions, or refer them to the information booth. This would be an adjunct to what the information booth does, not a replacement.
- I like that they use volunteers in many capacities and are able to help volunteers use their gifts.
- Make more use of volunteers' backgrounds and expertise in enhancing or adding to gallery demonstrations.

#### *7% (4) Feedback and communication*

- Do more listening to volunteers who have helpful experiences. Most volunteers have more experiences than employees and good common sense.
- Find a ways to make a genuine effort to involve volunteers in the "brain storming" phase of plan formation for the SMM.
- When exhibits are changed on our floor or new ones put on display, we should be advised-at least in print. I do not drive, so I cannot attend update meetings.
- Meetings.

#### *6% (3) Computers*

- Encourage website interactions. For now, it's free space. Invest in website design efforts that make visitors connected but not so comprehensive that they vie for the Internet vs. the real thing.
- I would love more computer experience.
- Use the technology of computers and save in secretarial paper work.

#### *6% (3) Corporate sponsors*

- Find new funding or museum support sources--golden angels, corporate givers, etc.
- Increase liaison with Minnesota businesses. There are many great companies in the Twin Cities that would probably love to partner on exhibits that focus on their expertise.
- The Woodbury Library Collectors Corner is a good innovative approach. Get closer to communities with outreach.

#### *4% (2) Training*

- More hands on training in the exhibits rather than talking about them so that the volunteers and staff are more comfortable engaging our visitors.
- Offer a training course to "qualify" for the extra duties for those who would be interested.

#### *4% (2) Signage*

- A directory at the base of the stairs, or at the door of the elevators that points the way to various exhibits or services. Example: triceratops, mummy, bathroom, snacks, etc. This may not cut costs, but can help the visitor enjoy his visit.
- More Lobby Displays.

#### *10% (5) Other*

- Ask the visitor if it is a first time visit and if it is, mention some key areas that they should not miss.
- More recycle.
- There is already a move to save costs that appear to lessen the experience of the visitors.
- Serving dinner to VAC seems like an unnecessary expenditure.
- Number of passes for volunteers is excessive.

#### *29% (15) None*

- At the moment, I can't think of anything.
- For now everything is ok, no comment.
- I am really impressed with the people and how it works.
- I have no idea, because I have no experience in any form of Cost Management of any sort, unfortunately.
- I have no idea.
- I have not worked here long enough to understand the cost issues.
- NC.

- None. (3)
- None at this time.
- None at this time as they are given periodically and addressed.
- None. See next question.
- Nothing to add.
- Seems to me we're doing it presently. I see no waste or excess. The museum has good visitor traffic and quality exhibits.
- Sorry-can't think of anything.
- Unsure about any.

## **Appendix E: Suggestions on how to reduce costs in the Volunteer Department (n=55)**

### *19% (10) Volunteer recognition*

- Corporate sponsors could give the annual volunteer gifts.
- I don't think we need the Recognition Dinner in September. A sheet of statistics would suffice. Awards, important to some people, could be posted in the Volunteer Headquarters.
- I enjoyed two activities during the Volunteer Appreciation Week. These probably cost less than the annual dinner, which I have rarely attended. I rather attend a lecture or a film for volunteers than receive a certificate or pin. Likely most others disagree with me.
- I think it's important not to cut volunteer recognition.
- I'm not sure the annual volunteer's banquet is necessary. The same is true of the holiday greeting cards.
- Many companies have eliminated or reduced the number of social activities provided - meals, etc.
- Omit birthday and Christmas cards to volunteers. I think many of us really don't care if we get them or not.
- Stop sending birthday cards, and supplying free beverages.
- The lunch for volunteers during volunteer week was nice...for those who could come. How about a free truffle from Just Truffles (the good stuff) with a live, in person thanks from a staff person?
- Truthfully I'd still volunteer if the perks were reduced. I'm surprised at the number of people I can bring to the museum each day for free. Maybe consider charging a reduced rate for guests of volunteers. Or get rid of the free admission for volunteers and instead just provide a membership for the volunteer and their family.

### *15% (8) Electronic communication*

- A volunteer web site that provides volunteers most information without taking staff time - I think you have started that all ready.
- Already doing this but continue to use the e-mail/internet for communications. Mail costs money.
- Avoid mailings--encourage an email community if possible which considering the age of the volunteer force, it may be a challenge, as well as a sensitive issue.
- Doing things online will make a difference.
- I liked that more things are on-line and do not need to be mailed out. I think if you gave us the option of getting mailings sent via e-mail that people would be do this in lieu of paper mailings.
- Most volunteers probably don't know what the costs of the Volunteer Department are. Using email vs. snail mail is being used as much as possible.
- Use more e-mail instead of printing and mailing
- Use more e-mail, online information sharing...less paper.

### *9% (5) Reduce staff*

- Eliminated a management position. Put all management duties back in the volunteer department and move fund raising and outside meetings to someone else or eliminate them.
- I am not aware of what sort of budget obligations, other than staff, the department has. Reducing staff would not enhance support.
- Reduce administrative costs.
- Remove dead weight ...there seems to be a bit around.
- Replace the director of volunteers.

#### *7% (4) Training*

- Less "lifestyle" type lectures.
- Rather than cutting the already minimal expenditures for volunteers, increase the volunteer experience with serious training.
- Think about innovative ways to challenge volunteers to do even more. Even if it involved some new learning, most seniors welcome new opportunities.
- Video/DVD Training Library.

#### *15% (8) Other*

- Can get paid for the times at SMM for like the ones that's 1-4 pm. Age 14 and up.
- Encourage carpool.
- Have more volunteers take on routine office duties.
- Have volunteers own their own vest and clean it themselves.
- If the overhead associated with the open break and lounge area, as one enters the Volunteer Headquarters, is charged to the Volunteer Department, it should not be. I do not claim knowledge regarding who is responsible for that area.
- Maintain current volunteers by personal follow-ups of those that may be falling to the wayside. Maintaining the volunteer pool would reduce the need to recruit and train new volunteers. There will always be a need for new volunteers but even a small reduction would free up the management workload.
- Please note I would love to volunteer more.
- Volunteer staff should interact with volunteers about new initiatives to get their views and to take them seriously.

#### *29% (16) None*

- Do not have a grasp of the cost categories so do not have an idea about how they can be reduced.
- I believe they are doing their share.
- I don't think the volunteer department spends too much on its volunteers. Not at all!
- I think that the costs of the volunteer department are already reduced because I have noted nothing of unnecessary costs.
- NC.
- No idea.
- None. (5)
- None at this time.
- None, if I worked other areas, I might have a better feel for everything. But, due to the fact that I travel such a distance I sign up for Special Exhibits only.
- None. I am unfamiliar with any Science Museum Budget processes.
- Not my area of expertise.
- Nothing to add.
- Seems to me we're doing it presently. I see no waste or excess. Volunteers thrive on praise, which costs nothing!
- Sorry! I have NONE (and I am a complainer...not really) the staff is wonderful! They always make it seem that they have time for you. I love the birthday card...especially when they take the time TO WRITE A MESSAGE ON IT!!!!
- Sorry-can't think of anything.
- The volunteers save the SMM so much money from their volunteer efforts it is ludicrous to talk about reducing volunteer costs.



## **Appendix F: Final comments (n=75)**

### *13% (10) Communication*

- I signed up for birding session at Warner Nature Center during volunteer week in May. It was cancelled and I received no notice thereof!
- Why is it necessary to log in time in and out on 4M when there are computers in the shop? I don't always get up to 4M until later. I never had to punch in during 40 years of working in the shop.
- Am happy and all the information supplied to me when starting my time at the information desk.
- I appreciate the online information and website---saves lots of money and keep us informed. I've heard that some people feel there are too many of them---I read them and am glad to be updated on things.
- I think it's great how organized the information booth has become.
- I would like to have an updated list of the number of hours I have volunteered. I requested to know the number of hours but I didn't get feedback.
- Sometimes when things aren't very busy I go on-line with my laptop. When I asked around how to do that, no one, absolutely no one had any idea. I found my own way and can now show others, but I sure got no help from any full time SCM people.
- There are some pretty smart "old-timers" with years of experience in many fields and business... Listen to them and execute some of their suggestions. VAC appears to be too autonomous.
- Communication is very up-to-date and ability to help out is wonderful.
- I wish there was a better system for trying to find substitutes for days with conflicts. One possibility would be to have a group e-mail list for each department that could be activated through an absence notification from the volunteer. We could then e-mail the volunteer department with our conflict date and time, and the substitute request could automatically be forwarded to all gallery volunteers. This assumes that everyone has (and routinely checks) e-mail.

### *4% (3) Exhibits*

- The expansion of the Dinosaurs and Fossils Gallery and the addition of dinosaur and other fossils as I understand had a lot to do with increasing the popularity of the SMM with visitors, young and old, over the years. Now the Gallery has been reduced in size, the most recent curator left and has not been replaced, dig programs cancelled/cut back, other D/F gallery supervisors have resigned and left, and budgets for purchasing fossils seem to be very limited. Dinosaurs are not an end in themselves, but serve as a great introduction for youngsters to science and scientific research and methods, and are one of the great science stories of earth's creatures. I think it is a mistake and a shame that this area has been reduced in priority and importance in light of its contribution to the museum's growth, and its ability to enthrall visitors and get them to visit the museum as well as other galleries!
- The ranting would be the ruination of the collector's gallery. What can be done?
- I'm not thrilled about the erosion of the Collections Gallery.

### *48% (36) Volunteer experience*

- I think the lunch break is too long for some volunteers.
- Over the years the volunteer experience has become less fun and more like a job. With the increasing number of people at the museum the four hour shifts are becoming more difficult, there is less chance to relax and enjoy the experience. I'm tired of the constant talking after

two hours. I don't like the check in/check out procedures. I never even used a time clock when I worked for money, and the food at Elements has gotten really bad.

- I have been a volunteer since the new museum opened. Many things have changed, mostly positive. I understand working in the evening is very different from the daily experience.
- SMM used to be a great place to volunteer. Unfortunately, things have degraded to the point where I wonder when I'm going to be replaced by a volunteer with no memory of how wonderful it used to be, who's more ethnically diverse, and who is willing to donate a lot of money just to keep their volunteer activities in good repair.
- A great place.
- About the last question: four friends/neighbors have started at the SMM in the past year because of us! I think it's a wonderful opportunity for people.
- As stated in the opening remarks, the SMM is an excellent location for volunteering. The education you receive from both training and exhibits, the satisfaction that comes from enhancing the visitor's experience, the privilege of being part of a world class museum, and all for free! The hours put in more than pay for themselves in what one receives back. There are days I feel I should be paying for the opportunity to volunteer.
- Every chance I get I do encourage friends and family to become a volunteer (and not only for the great perks!!).
- Generally a friendly, positive experience.
- Good Experience, and thank you for all opportunity and chance and I'll continue to serve for the future in your organization.
- I always look forward to coming to the SMM, which means it is a very positive experience for me.
- I am not the normal volunteer, working weekly about one hour editing an e-newsletter at home. Right now this works for me, and I greatly appreciate the chance to continue in this capacity. I cannot speak to the program in terms of the on-site programs, as I have not worked in the galleries or other areas. Although I appreciate the involvement the volunteers are given to attend lectures and other events, I am only able to participate after business hours, which limits potlucks and things like that. But, I do not need that to be happy in my volunteer position. I constantly feel appreciated and supported. Thanks!
- I am very happy to belong to the SMM.
- I have enjoyed getting to know some of the repeat visitors over the few months I've been there. They always stop by to find out what we are doing at our station, even if they have already done it before.
- I love coming to work at SMM and it's become a kind of gold standard for me in judging the other volunteering I do (I am pretty active). I've learned a ton about how to work with visitors and other volunteers and made friends that are great.
- I love science and people. The museum provides me an opportunity to share my talents with the general public.
- I really can't say anything negative, it was a great experience and one I'll be recommending!
- I wouldn't have spent volunteering at SMM, if I did not greatly enjoy doing so and feel somewhat valuable to the Museum. Thanks for putting up with me all those years.
- It has all been extremely positive.
- Keep up the good work. I love volunteering at SMM and I see myself continuing to volunteer for years to come.
- Love the Science Museum! Looking forward to Titanic!
- Love volunteering, no need for me to improve, especially at my age!
- My experience has been great!
- My volunteer experience was excellent. I enjoyed the interaction with the people attending the CSI exhibit and felt that what I had to with them was eye opening and well received.

- No rants or raves. I'm happy doing what I do. I'm glad to help the SMM the little I contribute.
- One of the benefits that is most impressive is the general feeling that the work of the volunteers is truly appreciated. Add to that the response of visitors who thank you for what you have said or done and it becomes a very worthwhile way to spend your time.
- Overall, I believe my experience as a volunteer has been very good.
- Thanks for the friendly support.
- Thanks I love it!!!
- The SMM is a wonderful place for families. My kids and grandchildren have all benefited from the activities available there.
- This is COOOOOL!!!
- This place is awesome.
- Volunteering at the Museum is a realization of a dream that I caught from a current volunteer. I was intrigued by what he was studying and wanted to do something similar. This is an excellent opportunity for me as my background is in the physical and geological sciences. Thank you for this opportunity to stretch myself after retiring.
- Overall, it has been a positive experience.
- Overall the volunteer experience is enjoyable but believe the core gallery training is lacking and there is little support.
- Everyone I have worked with has been fantastic. I have already told two of my coworkers they should volunteer.

### *3% (2) Flexibility*

- I know that my own individual situation does not allow me (due to time constraints) to take part more in the trainings offered or volunteer experiences. I can only complete the minimum number of hours per week and I feel that even that is too much sometimes. I realize that in order to have a successful volunteer program you must set minimums, but I feel that on a case-by-case basis you should be more flexible. I think my youth and my outside career allow me to connect well with visitors and I hope that I am appreciated for that. I don't feel that way, however. You appeal to people that don't work full-time or are retired. I would like to see you appeal more to people who don't have a bunch of time, but are still committed to helping. There is nothing more that I love than to support something that I believe in, and I have always been a fan of SMM.
- I'm hoping to bring aboard other visiting scientists in the near future to share their expertise in the insect collection. They may or may not be interested in a long-term Research Associate commitment when they see the login hour's procedures. Most of us prefer much more flexibility.

### *4% (3) Learning*

- It just has been an amazing time of learning about science just as visitors and how you have to treat them.
- The learning experience alone makes volunteering totally worthwhile. It has had a huge impact on my life!
- I love volunteering at the museum. People are so friendly and positive. I learn new things each time I volunteer. The collections gallery is being chopped to bits. Lets display more of the unique things that are in storage. Give us some space back!!!

### *23% (17) Paid staff*

- The staff people socialize among themselves but not much with the volunteer. There are some great exceptions, which make the job fun.

- Volunteer Headquarter leadership and support rocks!!! I do feel that the wearing of blue jeans and the like has deteriorated the image of the staff and to some degree SMM. When the SMM is relatively quiet, there is no need to have a VA in the Information Booth with a/the volunteer. You'd think better use could be made of paid staff.
- As hinted at in another question, sometimes it feels that the staff treats the volunteers as a bunch of senior citizens that needs baby sitting.
- I spoke to Linda once about this, that is staff, and except for one incident staff is good. The exception is a staff member on another case, being very negative and speaking where anyone passing could hear what is being said. Whatever issues the person in particular had, this person should have kept it out of the exhibit area.
- I worked hard to prepare and give a lecture relating to the water exhibit. No water staff, no staff at all showed up. Volunteers feel like second-class citizens. They are ignored when staff brings guests to their areas. Museum has a poor policy for benefits of part-time employees resulting on too many left without health insurance.
- The Information Booth supervisor -- meaning a paid staff person -- can be borderline persnickety. If I dial an SMM phone number for a guest/patron who has given me the name of the person he or she wants to talk to, and then I hand the phone to the guest/patron so he/she can speak directly with, or leave a recorded message for, the desired SMM staff person, for heaven's sake let it go. That's the way I'm going to do it because it makes sense. And most importantly, the guest/patron invariably is perfectly happy with that mode of handling.
- Kudos to the "volunteer grant" donors.
- I think the Volunteer Department does an awesome job. Their enthusiasm and sincere appreciation of what we do enhances my volunteer hours.
- Jessica is very good. She will be missed when she goes to the Big Back Yard.
- The SMM is my home base. The volunteer staff and floor staff make it that way. That's why the SMM is a stabilizer in my life while my personal life is always in transition. That's the way it should work.
- The staff has all been very kind.
- I like the energy and enthusiasm of paid staff and their appreciation of the work of volunteers. They go out of their way to make a volunteer feel appreciated and comfortable in the assignment without unnecessary intrusion of their work. I'll admit that I miss the greater contact available in the old museum that has lessened in the new museum. Obviously the facilities are far better, but it has spread people out more so encounters are fewer.
- Positive - I enjoy and feel comfortable with all staff members. Everyone is very friendly and helpful. Main negative - sometimes reservations has too many school groups assigned for a set lunchtime, and we have trouble figuring out where some can sit (just not enough room).
- Seen good improvement with the gallery supervisors, they are much more interactive and proactive in those interactions. I'd like to be trained on more the experiments in the experiment gallery however I understand the time it takes to do this.
- The staff is very friendly and helpful.
- The gallery supervisors have been very helpful in checking in with me and making sure that I have what I need for my project. They have been very efficient in answering my questions and getting me assistance if necessary.
- My direct supervisors are wonderfully supportive. The Volunteer Department does an incredible job of supporting our work as well.

#### *5% (4) Training*

- Expand the time for training. Start the Mentoring Program. Training will be a great success.
- More and better training; regular updates both in the gallery and for explanation of museum-wide changes. Support for new volunteers as they learn the ropes of interacting with visitors as well as working their demos. Some way to encourage the evening/weekend volunteers who rarely get to see volunteer dept. staff or gallery staff.
- I like that the speakers you bring in for training are usually excited about their topics.
- You MUST improve training. The same number of days for each basic training session does NOT work. Some special exhibits require very little and some require more. All the core exhibits are short changed but they too should be set up to address the requirements of that particular hall. You don't know it but you are depending too much on the old timers to know what is available in the hall to use as teaching material and like playing "telephone," information is lost on each iteration.

#### *9% (7) Other*

- I did introduce my coworker to volunteering.
- The four-hour stint on your feet without a break sometimes feels a little long. We need to either eliminate the vendor machines or have a staff member have money to make change or to replace money lost in the machines. As it is now, they need to go to level five, which is not a good idea because they either have to go up alone or the teacher has to leave his/her other charges alone.
- In my long experience in technical occupations, I feel much more useful in assignments that require some skill and or challenges. I feel I will have contributed more than just muscle.
- I have brought others to volunteer at the SMM. I enjoy every minute of my work.
- I've recommended volunteering at SMM to several friends, a few of whom are now also volunteers. I usually carry a Volunteer Brochure with me to give to anybody who seems to show an interest in our volunteers or in becoming a volunteer.
- My family has all enjoyed volunteering at SMM - from my grandparents, parents, husband, and children.
- The Information Booth location has changed since I began. Most new attendees are a bit confused on arrival and hesitate to come to the booth with questions. Instead they ask the River Gallery people or wander around. Maybe we need flashing lights or arrows to point the way for questions, help etc.

## Appendix G: Volunteer Satisfaction Survey 2009



### Volunteer Satisfaction Survey 2009

Hello SMM Volunteer!

Volunteers are a vital part of the Science Museum of Minnesota and we want to make sure the experience you have as a SMM volunteer is both meaningful and enjoyable. To ensure this, we are asking for your feedback to help us improve SMM's volunteer program.

The survey will take up to 15 minutes to complete. In appreciation for completing the entire survey, you will receive one volunteer hour. You'll need to write down your 4-digit Volunteer ID number at the end of the survey to receive the incentive, but it will not be stored in relation to your answers.

In addition to receiving one volunteer hour for filling out this survey, if more than 60% of the volunteers fill out the survey, the Volunteer Department will donate three beehives to the Heifer Project International.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. Your Volunteer ID number will not be reported with your responses to ensure that your comments remain anonymous and confidential. For this reason, we encourage you to be open and honest in your responses to ensure we make the necessary changes to SMM's volunteer program.

This evaluation of SMM's Volunteer Department is being carried out by the Science Museum of Minnesota's Department of Evaluation & Research in Learning. Our role is to listen to volunteers' voices and share the final survey results with the Volunteer Department staff. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Sarah Cohn, SMM Evaluation and Research Associate, at (651) 265-5972 or scohn@smm.org.

Thank you in advance for your time. As a SMM Volunteer, your feedback is extremely important!

~~~~~  
**1. Thinking only about the past year, how would you rate your overall volunteer experience at SMM?**

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Exceptional

**2. Please explain the reason for your rating in Question 1.**

**3. There are a variety of trainings and workshops available in a given year for volunteers. When was the last time you attended each of the following types of trainings?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Special Exhibits Trainings
- \_\_\_\_\_ Core Gallery Trainings
- \_\_\_\_\_ Museum-wide Workshops and Lectures (Brown Bags, Adult Series workshops, Visiting experts, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteer Department Potlucks

**4. Please rate each type of training you attended in the past year. For example, if you participated in a number of special exhibit trainings, please rate the overall quality of the special exhibit trainings.**

|                                    | Poor                     | Fair                     | Good                     | Excellent                |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Special Exhibits Trainings         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Core Gallery Trainings             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Museum-wide Workshops and Lectures | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Volunteer Department Potlucks      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**5. Are you aware of the Volunteer Advisory Council (VAC)?**

- Yes                       No

**5a. If yes, in what ways has the VAC supported your experience volunteering at the museum? (Check all that apply)**

- The VAC serves as a spokesperson for my questions, issues, and concerns.  
 The feedback I have given the VAC has resulted in improvements in the volunteer program at SMM.  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Have your experiences working as a SMM volunteer seemed to change in the past two years?**

- Yes                       No

**6a. Has your experience improved?**

- Yes                       No

**6b. What changes have you seen?**

**7. Do you feel that your comments are heard and responded to?**

- Yes                       No

**8. Do you see how your work fits within the museum's mission?**

- Yes                       No

**9. The Science Museum of Minnesota is continuously looking for ways to improve their offerings while always watching the bottom line. What ideas, if any, do you have that would support SMM's efforts to save costs while supporting visitors' experience?**

**10. What ideas do you have that could help the Volunteer Department reduce its costs while still supporting the volunteer corps.?**

**11. Which of the following volunteer position(s) have you held in the past year? (Check all that apply)**

- Special/Temporary Exhibits (Wild Music, Race, Pompeii, Animation, Deadly Medicine)
- Behind the Scenes
- Core Galleries (Mississippi River Gallery, Human Body Gallery, Collections Gallery, Dinos & Fossils, Experiment Gallery, Big Back Yard)
- Information Booth
- Special Events
- School Group Greeter
- Clerical Support
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

**12. How long have you volunteered at SMM?**

- Less than a year
- 1-3 years
- 4-7 years
- 8-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- 21-25 years
- 26-30 years
- More than 30 years



**13. What is your age range?**

- 12-17
- 18-21
- 22-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60-69
- 70-79
- 80-89
- 90+

**Thank you for completing the first part of this survey!**

**If you would be willing, we would love just a little more feedback from you. There are eight questions left. If you complete the final questions you will receive a volunteer hour.**

**14. Overall, how prepared did you feel for your volunteer position(s) as a result of the various training(s) you've attended in the past year?**

|                                    | Unprepared               | Somewhat Unprepared      | Somewhat Prepared        | Prepared                 | Not applicable, did not receive training for my position |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Special Exhibits Trainings         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                                 |
| Core Gallery Trainings             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                                 |
| Museum-wide Workshops and Lectures | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                                 |
| Volunteer Department Potlucks      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                                 |

**15. For each “unprepared” or “somewhat unprepared” response in the table above, what changes could be made to the training that would have helped you feel more prepared?**

**16. How would you rate the supervision and support you've received from the following groups in the past year? If a certain group does not apply to your volunteer position, check “Not Applicable.”**

|                                                        | Poor                     | Fair                     | Good                     | Excellent                | Not Applicable           |
|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Volunteer Department staff (Heather, Linda, Christine) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Gallery Program Supervisors (Ana, Shari, Kate)         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| General Gallery/Exhibit Staff                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Curators (Gretchen, Ed, Bruce, Dick, Tilly)            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| KAYSC (Kristen P., Claudia, Oanh, Dan)                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**17. Please provide suggestions on how each supervisory group could have done a better job.**

**18. Do you have any other ideas on how we could improve your overall supervision and support?**

**19. What is the likelihood that you would recommend volunteering at SMM to a friend or family member?**

- Very Unlikely
- Unlikely
- Somewhat Unlikely
- Somewhat Likely
- Likely
- Very Likely

**20. Rant and rave. Last chance to provide any additional comments (both positive and constructive) about your volunteer experience and suggestions for improvement. (Use the back of this sheet if needed).**

**Tell us a little bit about yourself to help us understand your responses.**

**21. What is your gender?**

- Male
- Female

**22. What is the highest level of education you have completed thus far?**

- Less than High School
- Completed High School
- Some College or Technical Education
- College Degree
- Graduate Degree
- Doctorate

**23. What is your race/ethnicity? (Check all that apply)**

- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian
- Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian
- Black or African descent
- White
- Hispanic or Latino
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your time and feedback!**

**To receive one volunteer hour, please write down your 4-digit Volunteer ID Number. If you don't know your Volunteer ID number, please write down your first and last name. To ensure your responses remain anonymous, your name will be reported separately from your survey. Do not enter this hour using VicNet. A staff member will enter the additional hour by hand.**

ID # \_\_\_\_\_ Name (If you don't know your #) \_\_\_\_\_