



My View

TIP Volunteers

April is National Volunteer Month, and I want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to all of our TIP volunteers. In a past My View, I talked about three qualities that every TIP volunteer possesses — a cool mind, a warm heart and a steely spine (courage). In this My View, I want to talk about a fourth quality of TIP volunteers — leadership. One of the joys of my involvement in TIP over the years is seeing how TIP volunteers rise up to become TIP Leaders of their local affiliates. They step up and take on significant roles and responsibilities. TIP volunteers are fundraisers, board members, dispatchers, public speakers, briefers, debriefers . . . and the list goes on. In other words, TIP volunteers are part of the TIP Leadership Team. They have a sense of ownership of their local affiliates, and they are willing to do what it takes to help their affiliates survive and thrive.

There is a lot written these days in nonprofit publications about the importance of involving volunteers in all operating aspects of nonprofit organizations and about the wisdom of treating volunteers as “unpaid staff” not “just volunteers.” In TIP, we have had that philosophy for 25 years, and I think that is the primary reason we have been able to grow.

Those I talk to outside of TIP are always amazed at how TIP affiliates are able to do so much with so little. They wonder how we can offer comprehensive 24/7/365 services with only one or two paid staff persons, or in some cases with no paid staff at all. All of us in TIP know the “secret.” It’s because our volunteers aren’t “just” volunteers. They are TIP leaders who are passionate about our mission, and who are willing to do what it takes to help us accomplish our mission.

Bravo to all of our unpaid leaders!

Wayne would like to hear your thoughts.
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