

STAR Search 2005

**Report
on
2005 STPs Survey on Volunteer Driver
Organizations and Drivers**

**The Beverly Foundation
Pasadena, CA**

May 2006

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The STAR Search survey is an annual survey of Supplemental Transportation Programs for seniors (STPs). The survey originated in 2000 and has continued on an annual basis since that time. Currently, there are over 500 organizations in the STAR Search data base.

This report summarizes the results and provides data from the 2005 STPs survey of volunteer drivers programs and volunteer drivers. The survey was conducted in the summer of 2005.

The Executive Summary introduces the purpose, the participants, and the findings of the organization and volunteer driver surveys. It goes on to present challenges and recommendations for further research.

Part I: Survey of Volunteer Driver Organizations includes an analysis of the responses of 140 organizations to the STAR Search survey.

Part II: Survey of Volunteer Drivers includes an analysis of the responses of 484 volunteer drivers to the STAR Search survey.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2005, the Beverly Foundation of Pasadena, CA conducted its annual STAR* Search survey as part of an ongoing effort to recognize organizations throughout the United States that operate Supplemental Transportation Programs for seniors (STPs). The 2005 STAR Search survey targeted:

- 1) Organizations with volunteer driving programs
- 2) Volunteer Drivers who provide services for older adults

Organization Survey The organization survey was designed to identify transportation programs that provide rides to seniors, and to gather information about their organizational history, service experience, and management practice. It was primarily intended for senior transportation programs that emphasized or included volunteer drivers. The organizations were also required to submit a creative strategy for volunteer driver recruitment.

Organizational applicants were required to:

1. provide transportation to seniors
2. include *volunteer drivers* in the driver pool
3. be in existence for 3 years or more
4. complete a STAR Search Survey (including recruitment plan)
5. submit at least two surveys from *volunteer drivers*

Organizations that submitted surveys had an opportunity to be selected for the 2005 STAR Awards for Excellence.

Driver Survey The driver survey was designed to gather information on the backgrounds of the volunteer drivers, their attitudes and experiences, as well as to solicit suggestions for improving transportation service for seniors.

Purpose The purpose of the STAR Search program is to demonstrate to policy makers and service providers the importance of volunteer driving programs, and to encourage volunteers to become participants in driving programs that provide rides for seniors.

Process The STAR Search 2005 was a two-step process. Applicants were required to:

- 1) complete a STAR Search Survey
- 2) have at least two volunteer drivers submit a survey and to write poems or observations on how volunteer driving is a “key to healthy aging”

As an incentive for their participation, organizations were given the opportunity to receive the STAR Award for Excellence. Drivers who submitted poems or observations also had a chance to win Volunteer Driver “Keys To Healthy Aging” Awards. The awards provided winners with recognition as well as cash prizes.

*Senior Transportation Action Response

Participants One hundred and forty volunteer driving programs from 37 states and 133 cities submitted surveys; and 484 volunteer drivers from these organizations returned surveys with poems or observations on the “keys to healthy aging”.

The Winners Five organizations received STAR Awards for Excellence in 2005:

S.T.A.R.
O'Fallon, MO

Aging Services, Inc - Medical Assisted Transportation
Cedar Rapids, IA

Valley Program For Aging Services
Waynesboro, VA

Encinitas Out and About Transportation Program
Encinitas, CA

VINE Faith In Action
Mankato, MN

These organizations designed noteworthy recruitment strategies that were judged on creativity, budget, efficiency, and sustainability. The winners received cash prizes of \$5,000 each for their programs.

With so many outstanding volunteer driver recruitment plans submitted, the Beverly Foundation expanded the awards to include 17 finalists:

Butler County Retired & Senior Volunteer Program - Augusta, KS
Retired Senior Volunteer Program of Cleveland and McClain Counties - Norman, OK
Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley, Inc. - Lawrence, MA
Huntington Beach Senior Services - Senior Outreach - Huntington Beach, CA
Senior Services Transportation Program - Seattle, WA
Aroostook Area Agency On Aging, Inc. - Presque Isle, ME
Senior Services Transportation - Elgin, IL
Saint Volunteer Transportation Program - Fort Collins, CO
I Care Incorporated - Decatur, GA
Wheels of Wellness - Philadelphia, PA
Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers - Hamden, CT
Western Community Action - Transportation Program - Marshall, MN
Senior Services of Northern Kentucky - Covington, KY
Ride Connection - Portland, OR
HELP of Ojai - Transportation - Ojai, CA
Project LIVE (Living Independently Through Volunteer Efforts) - Knoxville, TN
Faith In Action Northern Shenandoah Valley, VA - Winchester, VA

The recruitment plans will be organized into an Idea Book during the summer of 2006. 484 volunteer drivers participated in this year's survey. All of the drivers were asked to write a creative answer to the question: "How do you look at volunteering to drive as a 'key to healthy aging?'" Responses were made in the form of poems, observations, and slogans, and the winners are listed below:

Richard Otto (Senior Medical Travel - Badger, MN)
Jackie Goodall (Shepherd's Center - Lewisburg, WV)
Patricia Weinheimer (Hill Country Community Needs Council - Stonewall, TX)
George Horak (Seniors Outreach - Glenwood, IL)
Blanche Ahrens (Volunteer Services of Cedar County - Tipton, IA)
Robert Jones (Washington County Senior Citizens Services, Inc. - Washington, KS)
Dolores Tugwell (Lifespan Resources, Inc. - Atlanta, GA)
Ida Christopher (Senior Care Volunteer Transportation Program - Gloucester, MA)
Franklin Day (Care Links - Clifton Park, NY)
Maryanne Canavesio (Interfaith Caregivers Trenton - Robbinsville, NJ)
Beverly McGreevy (The Lynx (Penquis C.A.P. - Community Action Program, Inc.) - Millinocket, ME)
Terry Upcott (The Lynx (Penquis C.A.P. - Community Action Program, Inc.) - Lincoln, ME)
William Hayes (Grafton County Senior Citizens Council, Inc. - Enfield, NH)
Susan Avery Royer (Faith In Action - Sewickley, PA)
Carolyn Hindes (Medtrans Of The Volunteer Center - Shelton, WA)

FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY

The Organizations A total of 140 organizations responded to the survey, representing 133 cities and 37 states, including Washington, D.C. Survey respondents were primarily non-profit organizations with service histories ranging from 6 months to 47 years. Key findings from the surveys are summarized below.

- Organizations said they mainly served older adults, but also were available to people with disabilities and other age groups.
- Organizations covered mostly rural areas, but also provided services in suburban, as well as urban locations.
- Most of the organizations depended on grant support and donations from riders as their main source of funding.
- Organizations said the drivers primarily used their own vehicles, with less than one-third using their organizations' vehicles.
- About one-third of the organizations provided rides in the evening and on Saturday and Sunday in addition to providing weekday transportation; and about one-tenth had drivers available at night.
- Organizations provided door-to-door, hand-to-hand, and to a lesser degree, door-thru-door and escort services.
- Organizations indicated that the major concerns of their drivers were liability for an accident, finding time to drive, and gas/mileage reimbursements.

A more extensive profile of the organizations can be found in Part I of this report.

The Volunteer Drivers A total of 484 volunteer drivers completed the Volunteer Driver Survey. Respondents represented 288 cities and 38 states, including Washington, D.C. Key findings on these drivers and their driving experiences are summarized below. A more extensive profile of the organizations can be found in Part II of this report.

Profile of the Volunteer Drivers:

- More than 50% of the volunteers were 65 and older.
- Almost equals numbers of women and men volunteered to drive.
- 50% of the drivers had at least graduated from college.
- Most drivers were married and in the middle income group.
- An exceptionally high percent were Caucasians.
- Over 50% the drivers had more than 50 years of driving experience.
- Teachers/Educators, homemakers, and nurses were the top three occupations before becoming a volunteer driver.
- Drivers served both single riders and multiple riders.

Service Experiences of the Volunteer Drivers:

- Drivers mainly served seniors, a smaller proportion also were available to drive other age groups, as well as people with disabilities.
- While most drivers served daytime and on weekdays, many were also available to serve in the evenings and Saturdays.
- The most frequent driver destinations were for medical services, followed by shopping and personal activities.
- Most of the drivers used their own vehicles and carried their own personal liability insurance.
- Drivers indicated their major challenges were finding time to do the volunteer driving, finding the destinations for their riders, and emotional attachment to their riders.

The surveys of both organizations and volunteer drivers produced similar profiles of volunteer drivers with respect to their driving experience, attitudes, and relationships with management. In both surveys, volunteer drivers were identified as older adults who were motivated to serve the community by donating time to help those who were not able to get around on their own, and who found great satisfaction in helping others and feeling that their services were much needed.

Management Practice The organizations used application forms, job descriptions, handbooks, driver screening, training, feedback mechanisms, and evaluations to manage their volunteer drivers. However, some management practices were carried out less frequently, if at all. For example, most organizations required the completion of an application form, a job description and handbook, and a feedback mechanism such as meeting with staff and manager. However, management practices such as signing contracts and training in wheelchair transfer, first aid/CPR, and drug prevention were rarely included.

Driver Recruitment As part of the survey, organizations were asked to come up with creative methods to recruit drivers. Most organizations indicated that using media such as newspaper and the internet were effective. Organizations responded that the best places to recruit

volunteers included churches, and clubs such as the Kiwanis, Lion's Club and Rotary Clubs. In addition, organization stated that the top three concerns indicated by prospective drivers during the recruitment process were insurance and liability, time commitment and scheduling, and gas and mileage reimbursement.

Volunteer drivers stated in their survey responses that seeing the need for volunteer drivers, being asked to help, and wanting to help were the three main reasons for volunteering. These drivers believe that newspaper advertisements, being approached by another volunteer, and being asked to drive either by an organization or rider were the three main motivations to becoming a volunteer driver. When the volunteer drivers were asked why people chose not to volunteer, the top three answers were lack of time, being too busy, and the fear of not knowing what to expect.

These responses varied from the organizational survey results. The organizations assume that drivers are more concerned with financial and liability issues. But the volunteer driver surveys show that drivers are actually more concerned with scheduling and expectation issues. The survey responses show a difference in perspective between organizations and volunteer drivers in terms of recruitment.

CHALLENGES FOR SPONSORS

Three major challenges were expressed by survey participants with regard to volunteer driving. They were: funding, recruitment and management.

Funding With increases in gasoline prices, insurance, cost of maintenance, driver recruitment and other costs related to operating a senior transportation program, fundraising was the major problem identified by the organizations.

Driver Recruitment A major challenge identified by the organizations was the shortage of drivers to meet the continuous increase in demands for rides. The issues of safety, fighting traffic, insurance, gas prices, and time commitment were obstacles identified as preventing drivers from volunteering.

Driver Management Survey results indicated that formal screening and training of drivers were lacking, and driver attrition was high. As both programs and drivers face the challenges of cost, time limitation, and liability, it was suggested that more attention be paid to risk management practices.

Driver Poems

Fifteen poems and observations on how volunteer driving can be seen as one of "the key to healthy aging" were chosen as driver award winners. These fifteen drivers received cash prizes of \$100 each. Two examples from the winning entries are included below.

"I look at volunteer driving as a "key to healthy aging" because it keeps me active, keeps my mind busy learning new places, keeps my reflexes sharp dealing with traffic and weather, keeps me in contact with people who need encouragement or who encourage me, and finally, shows me where I could end up if I give up on living."

Terry Upcott

"Healthy Aging has two keys,
One is you, One is me.
You're the rider, I'm the driver;
Together we will go safely.
To the Doctor; To the Store,
I'm here to help in ways galore.
You'll be happy, So will I,
That I was able to volunteer drive!"

Richard Otto

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

To address the challenges and concerns for funding, driver recruitment and driver management, organizations made the following suggestions for further research.

- **Impact of Quality of Life** A deeper understanding on the impact of volunteer driving on the quality of life of the volunteer will lead to better recruitment, retention, and driver satisfaction. Thus, research is needed on how volunteer driving positively impacts people's lives.
- **Recruitment Practices** Recruitment is essential to volunteer driver programs. The fact that the overall senior population is increasing makes recruitment an even more important factor. Thus, further research is needed on effective recruitment strategies so that both programs and their volunteer driver pools can remain sustainable.
- **Risk Management Practices** The improvement of existing programs as well as the development of new and effective programs is important. Thus, research is needed on risk management approaches and practices.
- **Evaluation of Volunteer Driving Programs** Evaluation is important in determining the impact of the driving programs on physical, social, mental and spiritual well-being of senior riders. Thus, research is needed on how to evaluate volunteer driving programs.
- **Linkage of Community-based Organizations** The importance of collaboration among voluntary organizations should be investigated in order to understand how low-cost and effective community services can be provided. Thus, research is needed on linkage of community-based organizations with volunteer driving programs.
- **Funding Sources** Information on government policies, grants sources, and methods of fundraising are important for the development of successful volunteer driving programs. Thus, research is needed on funding sources for the support of volunteer driving programs.

CONCLUSIONS OF THE SURVEY

The survey reflects that the main concerns of the organizations are related to funding, recruitment, and management. Although organizations express difficulty in recruiting drivers, they point out that once recruited, the drivers experience satisfaction with their volunteer driving and over 50% report driving at least 1-5 hours per week.

The information provided by the organizations suggest that volunteer driver programs are sustainable, with 24% of the programs being in operation since the 1980's. The data shows that they are also cost efficient, and that collisions are infrequent.

Many creative recruitment strategies were submitted as a part of the application process by the organizations. An Idea Book with a compilation of all the plans will be produced by the Beverly Foundation for distribution in the year 2006.

The 2005 volunteer driver survey results demonstrate that liability is not a major concern when choosing to be a volunteer driver. This contrasts with organization responses on the reasons why people do not volunteer.

Through the many poems and observations received from the drivers, it is apparent that both the riders and the drivers benefit from the act of volunteering.

PART I

VOLUNTEER DRIVER ORGANIZATIONS DATA AT A GLANCE

The results of the surveys are presented in five areas.

1. A Profile of STAR Search 2005 Respondents
2. A Profile of Volunteer Driver Program Services
3. A Profile of Volunteer Drivers
4. Volunteer Driver Management Methods
5. Best Practices

The highlights of the topics above are summarized in the following data tables.

Table 1: The STAR Search 2005 Respondents

The table below introduces background information on the organization of volunteer driver programs that submitted applications for STAR Awards for Excellence.

Year Program Started	1970-1980	24%	
	1981-1985	10%	
	1986-1990	12%	
	1991-1995	13%	
	1996-2000	21%	
	2001-2004	13%	
Status of Organization	90%	Nonprofit	
	10%	Government/City/Municipal	
Area Served	79% Rural	54% Suburban	41% Urban
Cost of Insurance (2004 data) (Range= \$0 - \$75,399)	Average =	\$3,429	
	Total =	\$479,989	
Budgets (2004 data) (Range = \$0 - \$4,374,723)	Average =	\$98,900	
	Total =	\$13,846,041	
Organization Type	19% Senior Center 17% Faith-Based Organization 15% AAA 13% Social Service Program 12% Community Volunteer organizations 7% Transportation Service 15% Other		
Paid Staff	68% Part Time Staff, 64% Full Time Staff		

2. Volunteer Driver Program Services

Table 2 below introduces the “who, when, how, how many, and why” about services provided by the volunteer driving programs.

Table 2: Volunteer Driver Program Services

Ridership	99% Seniors 75% Persons With Disability 55% Adults 17% Children 15% Other								
Availability Of Drivers	<table border="0"> <tr> <td><u>Time Of Day:</u></td> <td><u>Day Of Week:</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>95% Daytime</td> <td>94% Weekdays</td> </tr> <tr> <td>36% Evenings</td> <td>38% Saturdays</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10% Nights</td> <td>36% Sundays</td> </tr> </table>	<u>Time Of Day:</u>	<u>Day Of Week:</u>	95% Daytime	94% Weekdays	36% Evenings	38% Saturdays	10% Nights	36% Sundays
<u>Time Of Day:</u>	<u>Day Of Week:</u>								
95% Daytime	94% Weekdays								
36% Evenings	38% Saturdays								
10% Nights	36% Sundays								
Reservation Preference	27% 24 hours in advance 23% 2 days in advance 29% more than 2 days in advance 14% same day 16% Other								
Insurance Coverage	67% Director and Staff Insurance 65% Volunteer Personal Liability Insurance 65% Volunteer Driver Excess Auto Liability 57% Auto Liability Insurance 49% Accident Insurance for Volunteers 32% Non-Owned/Hired auto Liability 10% Other								
Collision Experience	5% In The Past Year 12% 1-5 Years Ago 8% 5-10 Years Ago 8% 10 Years +								
Fee Structure	59% Rider Donation 46% No Fee 12% Mileage Rate 9% Flat Rate 7% Sliding Scale 10% Other								
Funding Source	71% Grant Funding 63% Rider Donation 18% Tax Revenue 13% Rider Fee 63% Other								
Trip Purpose	Top Three Most Frequent Trips: Medical Services Shopping Personal Activities								

3. A Profile of Volunteer Drivers

Table 3 below depicts the volunteer drivers - who they are, how they serve, their commitments, and their other involvements in the organizations.

Table 3: Volunteer Driver Profile

Driver type	65% Volunteer 34% Mixed of volunteer and paid
Total number of drivers in 2004	7,611
Volunteer Driver Pool Composition	96% Seniors 87% Young Seniors 68% Mid Lifers 40% Young Adults 17% Student
Gender Of Drivers	56% Female (total number = 4,244) 44% Male (total number = 3,367)
Vehicle	85% Driver's Vehicle 34% Program Leased/Owned 11% Rider's Vehicle

Table 3a: Top Ten Concerns of Volunteer Drivers

1. Insurance/Liability
2. Scheduling/Time Commitment
3. Cost/gas/mileage reimbursement
4. Driving Distance
5. Safety
6. Weather/conditions
7. Ability/frailty of rider
8. Directions/Map/Route
9. Commitment/Obligation
10. Clients/Passengers/Riders

4. Volunteer Driver Management Methods

The organizations were asked how they managed their drivers. Their responses are indicated on the chart below.

Table 4: Volunteer Driver Management

standards for safe drivers and safe driving conduct	94%
universally applied criteria for selection and screening of drivers	89%
driver training in defensive driving	51%
driver training in emergency measures	65%
driver training in passenger treatment (especially seniors)	82%
driver training for special vehicles	42%
regular maintenance and repair of service-owned vehicles	55%
insurance coverage for service owned and non-owned vehicles	68%
on-going evaluation of drivers, vehicles, and service delivery	84%
risk management strategies (above) applied to volunteers	70%
specialized training to transport people with dementia	37%

5. Best Practices

Organizations with volunteer driver programs presented a variety of methods to manage, recruit, raise funds and recognize their drivers. Best practices are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5: Best Practices

Places For Recruitment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Media/Newspaper/newsletter/internet 2. Churches 3. Clubs: Rotary/Lions/Kiwanis/Civic Groups 4. Senior Center/Senior Clubs 5. Communities 6. Conversation/One-on-One/Word of Mouth 7. Volunteer Fair/Volunteer Match 8. Referral 9. Television 10. Organizations
Hook For Volunteer Recruitment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Needs 2. Rewards 3. Flexibility 4. Satisfaction 5. Helpful 6. Service 7. Appreciation 8. Fun 9. Fulfillment 10. Reimbursement
Traits Of Volunteers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dependability 2. Availability 3. Compassionate 4. Reliable 5. Safe 6. Flexible 7. Committed 8. Caring 9. Friendly 10. Responsible
Why My Program Is Special	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Service provided by transportation program 2. The volunteers 3. Menu of services offered by program – such as case management, nutrition, etc. 4. Uniqueness of program – only program in area 5. Community Involvement 6. Interfaith/Faith-based 7. Ownership by Volunteers 8. Ownership by Riders 9. Maintains independence for seniors 10. Funding is by donation

PART II

VOLUNTEER DRIVERS DATA AT A GLANCE

The results of the survey of volunteer drivers are presented within the four topics below:

1. A Profile of the Volunteer Drivers
2. Volunteer Driver Services
3. Attitudes of Volunteer Drivers
4. Management Practices

1. A Profile of the Volunteer Drivers

The data gathered in the survey provides a fairly comprehensive profile of volunteer drivers.

Table 1: Volunteer Drivers – Who are They?

Age	88% older than 55 67% 65 and older
Gender	49% women 51% men
Education	38% high school 52% college graduates
Marital Status	66% married
Income	52% middle income (above \$30,000)
Ethnic Background	95% Caucasians
Driving Experience	80% 40+ years 54% 50 +years

Table 1a: Occupation Before Volunteering

1. Educator/Teacher
2. Homemaker
3. Nurse
4. Secretary/Administrative Assistant
5. Mother
6. Engineer
7. Military
8. Manager/Management
9. Retired
10. Driver (bus, trucks)

2. Volunteer Driver Services

The following table reports the type of services volunteer drivers provided – who did they serve, how long, where, when and how they served, and what other types of activities they were involved in the driving programs.

Table 2: Volunteer Drivers – What Do They Do?

Riders	41% single riders 59% multiple riders
Number of Years as Drivers	11% less than one year 18% more than ten years
Areas	34% urban 39% suburban 26% rural
Riders	97% seniors 75% people with disabilities 27% people with dementia 15% children 10% others
Purpose of Trips (Top Three Most Requested)	medical services shopping personal needs
Type Of Vehicle	86% driver's own vehicle 20% program leased/owned vehicles 4% riders' vehicles
When Driving Service was Provided	93% daytime 28% evening 15% night 92% weekdays 34% Saturdays 25% Sundays
Type Of Assistance	95% door-to-door 77% escort service 70% door-thru-door 90% hand-to-hand
Time Commitment	54% 1-5 hours a week 19% 6-10 hours a week 6% less than one hour a week 6% 11-20 hours a week.
Other Activities	18% Volunteer recruitment 16% Caregiver services 16% Board membership 7% Driver training 7% Driver scheduling 3% Driver recognition 2% Driver supervision

3. Attitudes of the Volunteer Drivers

The drivers were asked about their reasons for driving, what brought them the most satisfaction, and major concerns about their driving service. Table 3 summarizes these views of the drivers about their driving experience.

Table 3: Attitudes of Drivers – Why Do They Drive?

Major Reasons For Driving	86% to help others 71% to do something meaningful 48% give back to community
Major Challenges	21% finding the time to drive 14% emotional attachment 13% locating the destination
Greatest Satisfaction	88% helping people, feeling needed 56% getting to know the riders 37% donating time rather than money

Table 3a: What Driving A Person Means

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Helping 2. Satisfaction 3. Serving 4. Rewarding 5. Fulfillment 6. Caring 7. Pleasure 8. Happiness 9. Gratitude 10. Joy |
|--|

4. Management Practices

A special question was asked to elicit information about the relationship between volunteer drivers and management. Table 4 summarizes the data obtained from survey analysis.

Table 4: Volunteer Drivers and Management

Actively recruited	50%
Completed application form	80%
Signed a contract	27%
Received formal driver screening	73%
Received driver handbook	56%
Received driver training	49%
Received a job description	53%

Reported to a volunteer manager	83%
Had available a central place to meet with drivers/staff	71%
Had a mechanism to give feedback to paid staff	85%
Had evaluation as volunteer driver	49%
Worked with paid drivers	21%