

Inspiring Volunteering

At the 'Sharp' end of Volunteering!

Laura Sharp is 17 years old and volunteers at the Initiative Youth Project. She is also secretary of the Broad Street Community Centre Management Committee. Here she explains how much volunteering has meant to her.

How did you start volunteering?

I attended the Initiative Youth Project's Summer Programme in 2006. The Youth Worker contacted me and asked if I wanted to help plan next year's programme. Judith was so nice that I wanted to be more involved. So I started taking a lead, organising activities for children and young people. Now I have got more responsibility and help run the junior youth club.



What is the best thing about volunteering?

There's so many good things like meeting new people and I've explored possible career paths. It gives me experience – I have experience working in the Centre and on residential trips. It has given me skills like budgeting and organisational skills. Volunteering gives you skills you wouldn't think you would ever gain.

What have you got out of volunteering?

I have got so many certificates. At school I was given the Community Award and the Rector's Quach for my volunteering in the community. I've got my Youth Achievement Award Bronze and Silver and I'm working on my Gold. I've got my 50, 100 and 200 Hours MV Awards.

Where has volunteering led you?

As well as volunteering for the junior youth club, I'm now a paid Youth Worker at the Initiative, and a Youth Worker for Fife Council. I'm also doing my NC in Community Work at Adam Smith College. Community work is my chosen career and this is all through volunteering.

To read about more of Fife's Inspiring Volunteers, see pages 4 and 5

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An Abundance of 'gift horses'

Organisations - time to be creative!

Over the past few months Volunteer Centre Fife has seen a huge increase in the number of people coming forward to volunteer. This is good news for organisations that need volunteers and demonstrates that volunteering is being viewed in a more positive light than ever before.

However this situation does have its challenges. Several organisations have reported that they cannot take any more volunteers. Some have suffered funding cuts and had to reduce the number of volunteers that they involve in their work, due to less money available for essentials like travel expenses. However, included in the increasing number of volunteers are people who have recently lost their jobs. They have valuable, transferable skills which could be put to good use in a voluntary role, while giving them experience or new skills to take to the workplace when the economic situation improves.

At Volunteer Centre Fife we aim to fulfil the aspirations of volunteers by matching them to opportunities that excite and challenge them but to achieve this we need you, the volunteer-involving organisations, to help us. There are several ways that volunteering opportunities can be created:

Opportunity splitting: If you are planning to take on a volunteer driver for 12 hours a week... why not take on two volunteers doing 6 hours each?

Job Carving: You might have a paid admin worker who you have asked to carry out surveys on top of the primary work of their post. That specific task could become a volunteer role leaving the paid worker to focus on their primary job.

Other opportunity types: Only have one volunteer role in your organisation? You probably have the capacity for three or four! Sometimes it's a case of thinking laterally. For example, a residential care home for the elderly with a number of volunteer visitors also has a volunteer gardener to help tend the grounds.

All of these methods are designed to help your organisation with the work you already do. We are not suggesting creating "extra tasks", just new opportunities that could help your organisation cope with current demands.

If the thought of taking on volunteers or looking creatively at how you could involve volunteers is daunting, don't forget we have Volunteer Development Co-ordinators in East, West and Central Fife who can help make the process as easy as possible for you.

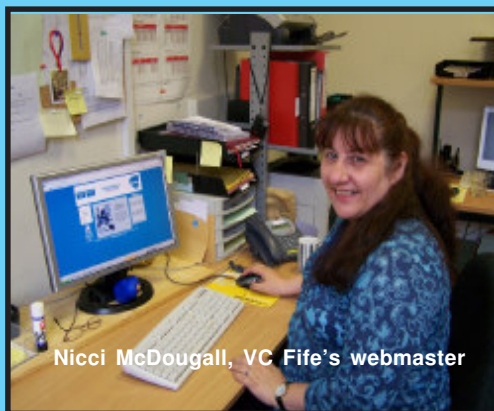
So, don't look these volunteer 'gift horses' in the mouth, let us help you to welcome them on board!

Information Highway

Volunteering Information on the Net

If you would like to volunteer, but need more information, Volunteer Centre Fife's user-friendly website has an information section which you might find useful.

Simply go to www.volunteeringfife.org and click on the button 'For Volunteers' on the left hand side. Here you will find a general information section, an online database of current opportunities and a downloadable registration form. There is also a section on support available and information for young people and the MV Award.



Nicci McDougall, VC Fife's webmaster

If you are interested in Employer Supported Volunteering (volunteering carried out by employees) you can find details here. The sections headed 'Overseas Volunteering' and 'Coming to the UK' have information and links to useful websites. If you wish to offer your skills as a volunteer, have a look at the 'Offer Your Services' section.

If you are an Organisation thinking of involving more volunteers or would like inspiration from others, check out the database of opportunities on our website and see page 2 opposite.

And if you still need more information, you can call your nearest Volunteer Centre Fife office and speak to an advisor. The contact details for each office are available on the website too!

Community Service Volunteers (CSV), the country's leading volunteering organisation is concerned that young people are missing out on the valuable experience which volunteering offers, due to a lack of opportunities.

CSV's director of full-time volunteering in Scotland, Is Szoneberg, commented that there was increasing concern that the rise in volunteer numbers was not being met by placement opportunities. "The recession is partly to blame but more should be done across the board to accommodate young people looking to volunteer." She added that many professionals saw volunteers as a threat to their jobs and did not understand the help they could provide. (TFN 9.10.09)



The Initiative, featured on page 1, is a good example of an organisation which recognised a volunteer's skills and helped her develop new ones which in turn benefit the organisation. Could your organisation do the same? For assistance contact your local Volunteer Centre Fife office.

Volunteer of the Year Awards 2009

“Inspiring Volunteers”

The Beveridge Park Hotel recently hosted Volunteer Centre Fife’s annual award ceremony to reward and recognise the remarkable work of volunteers throughout the region.

Around 150 people attended this year’s event, with guest speaker Tony Scott – a two-time National Speech Contest Winner and Lecturer at Stevenson College in Edinburgh. Entertainment was provided by dance groups Kesara and Kachina and tribute band Fun Razers with the evening getting off to a great start with an inspiring film by Daniel Casey and Jonathon Horner (Film & Media Students from Adam Smith College) featuring several voluntary organisations in Fife.

Young Volunteer of the Year *Caron Grieve*



Caron is an admin volunteer with the furniture recycling charity, Furniture Plus, in Dysart. She commits to more than her allotted hours, often at short notice, and assisted with the re-organisation of the office space. She also works closely with the sales team to help customers.

Open Category Volunteer of the Year *Peter Aitken*

Peter, a practising solicitor, offers free legal advice to patients and their families at Victoria Hospice in Kirkcaldy. He also carries out home visits.

He has been volunteering at the Hospice for 12 years, and doubles up as a ‘Meet and Greet’ volunteer on a Sunday evening. Peter acts above and beyond the call of duty for the benefit of the patients of the Hospice.

Volunteer Team of the Year *Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland In-reach Services at Cameron, Victoria and Queen Margaret Hospitals*

CHSS work in partnership with NHS Fife, to provide one-to-one support to patients of the stroke wards in the hospitals. The communication difficulties faced by the patients often leave them feeling socially-isolated, and the dedicated team of volunteers with CHSS have been working tirelessly to alleviate this. They often work under the tutelage of Speech and Language Therapists to deliver conversational support as well as reading and writing exercises.



Volunteer of the Year Awards 2009

“Inspiring Volunteers”

Diversity Award:

Volunteer Evening Receptionists Victoria Hospice

Two members of this four-person team moved to Scotland from a remote village in India only four years ago. Lydiya and Nimisha are still in their teens, and have adapted quickly to life in Scotland, speaking three languages, and writing in two of them. The team is made up by two more ‘mature’ volunteers, and has displayed excellent inter-generational practice, even taking part in a culture-swap exercise with the two Scottish members of the team.



Employer-Supported Volunteer of the Year: *Royal Bank of Scotland*

The G, S & F Fraud & A, M, L Dept from RBS Edinburgh's Gogar HQ completed a renovation of Home-Start's offices in Lochgelly, painting and re-decorating the children's rooms. The organisation's client families have been delighted by the new bright decor.

Give Something Back Supported Volunteers of the Year *Dawn Lockey and Michelle Hodge*

Both of these ladies have overcome substantial personal barriers to volunteer at Oakley Community Centre Lunch Club. They came to be at the club through the Give Something Project in West Fife. Between them they prepare, cook and serve meals to 14 elderly people at the club. Without the input of these two ladies, the club would cease to exist as the staff at the centre were unable to run it for much longer.



‘Moving On’ Volunteer of the Year *Chris Ward, Harbour Howff*



Chris Ward has overcome a number of barriers through volunteering including homelessness, social isolation and depression. Through the housing support service offered by ENeRGi in St Monans he began to volunteer in the project's Harbour Howff Community Café, getting heavily involved in the refurbishment and re-opening of the café. He has now moved on from volunteer to full-time café manager, but still dedicates more time than he is paid for. He also now supports and trains volunteers in the café.

Mature Volunteer of the Year *Moira Girvan*



Moira has been a volunteer at the Sailor's Rest Centre in Methil for an incredible 37 years! A period of ill-health last year did not deter Moira, still avidly giving time to the Thrift shop, lunch clubs and even has time to chair the Community Association and House Committee. Moira brings an unparalleled enthusiasm to the centre.

Co-operation and Inclusion

“Inspiring Change”

The first-ever Joint Conference of Councils for
Voluntary Service and Volunteer Centres



Delegates at the first joint conference of Scotland's Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS) and Volunteer Centres (VCs) proclaimed it a 'ground-breaking moment in the history of the networks' and 'a shining example for the future!'

The '**Inspiring Change**' Conference was organised by The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) on behalf of the two networks and came at an opportune time when new infrastructure bodies comprising the two organisations, together with Social Economy Partnerships, were being established locally across Scotland, including Fife. Volunteer Centre Fife, CVS Fife and VONEF were all represented at the Conference.

The Conference was divided into 'open space' sessions, which enabled delegates to set their own agendas. The session topics were extremely diverse but focused on how CVS's and VC's could support volunteers and the voluntary sector in the future, taking account of the changing political, social and economic landscapes.

John Swinney, MSP and Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth, gave the keynote speech in which he underlined the Government 's continuing support for the Third Sector and the importance of infrastructure bodies having an equal place on Community Planning Partnerships. He cautioned, however, that voluntary organisations would not be immune to overall cuts in budgets as a consequence of expected cuts in Scotland's block grant from Westminster.

Overall, the Conference gave delegates the opportunity to come together to share their local knowledge and expertise and to take this learning back to their own localities.



An example of an organisation aiming to bring communities together is **includeME**. This new organisation provides citizen advocacy for people with learning difficulties, who are over sixteen and living in North-East Fife.

Citizen Advocacy links people living in the community to individuals with learning difficulties, with the aim of developing a unique long-term partnership. Everyone has the right to say what they want when important decisions are being made which affect their lives. Everyone has the right to have their views valued, to have friends, fun and opportunities to contribute to the community. But some people have difficulties standing up for these rights.

For all these reasons and more, a citizen advocate can make a huge difference in a person's life. They get to know them, how they communicate, what they like and don't like and what they need. They stand by them when they speak up for themselves or speak on their behalf. They help to build bridges into the wider community. They are now accepting referrals and are looking for people to become citizen advocates.

If you have a few hours to spare and want to make a difference contact Melanie Kyle at: **includeME**, Tom Rodgers Mill, East Burnside, Cupar KY15 4DQ, contact@includeme.org.uk
Tel no 01334 656242.

Giving and Receiving

Give Something Back



After a successful bid for re-funding Give Something Back (GSB) took off full-time again in West Fife in January 2009. Biff McMahon, the Volunteer Co-ordinator, took over from Jacquie Mellon, who ran the pilot of the project in this area.

Since January there has been a steady increase in the number of volunteers seeking some level of support into volunteering. This support can be as little or as much as is needed to help someone begin to volunteer. The support can last for up to eight weeks and often makes the difference between someone finding a suitable placement, and not getting started at all.

In some cases all that is needed is a little confidence-building beforehand and some company when meeting an organisation for the first time. With other people it may be referral to another organisation for support and advice before coming back to Biff. Sometimes the volunteer will need support for the first few weeks of volunteering, and this could be anywhere, doing anything! Biff could spend one day in a charity shop sorting through donations and labelling clothes. On another day she could be working in a kitchen helping to serve lunch to a group of elderly club members. She is currently busy in the gardens of two Residential Homes – lifting leaves, pruning and preparing the grounds for winter – with a man who is very keen on gardening.

Organisations find that after preparation work by Biff, or pre-volunteering training by Mary Ray, and after the initial period of support from the Volunteer Centre has ended, the volunteers are more than capable of sustaining their volunteering on their own.

If any organisation would like more information on the support offered by **Give Something Back**, please contact Biff on gsb@volunteeringfife.org for West Fife or Jacquie Mellon on gsbcentral@volunteeringfife.org.

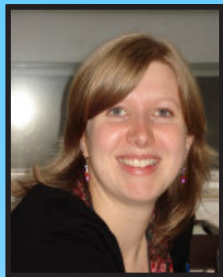
Service with a Smile

Two examples of volunteers who have 'given something back' for many years are Mary and Sheena. Teri Perry, Voluntary Services Manager at Victoria Hospice explains: "These two wonderful volunteers have donated a combined 24 years to the Victoria Hospice which has helped NHS Fife ensure that patients achieve an optimum life quality. They are also rightly proud of the fact that their combined ages clock up to 150 years.



They offer patients a professional manicure and hand massage which is very therapeutic and really relaxing. Patients are also given the option of having some light make-up applied and their hair put up – usually with a jewelled hair slide. Collectively this makes such a difference to the confidence and self-esteem of all involved – demonstrated via the peals of laughter coming from the hospice salon! "

Volunteer Centre Fife at your service



New face at Volunteer Centre Fife, Cupar office

Sarah Ballantine is the new Volunteer Development Co-ordinator at Volunteer Centre Fife in Cupar. As a Kingdom Graduate she gained experience in the voluntary sector through CVS Fife. She is quickly finding her way about the area and getting to know organisations in East Fife. She can be contacted on 01334 659134 or by e-mail: sarah.ballantine@volunteeringfife.org

Stephen moves West

The call of the West was too much for Stephen Adamson when a vacancy arose in the Dunfermline office of Volunteer Centre Fife. Building on his experience in East Fife over the past 18 months Stephen is now finding his feet amongst the outlying villages of West Fife and getting to grips with urban volunteering. Stephen's e-mail address remains as stephen.adamson@volunteeringfife.org

New Fife-wide Youth Worker

Gwen Young is the new Youth Development Worker covering the whole of Fife. For information on youth volunteering and the MV Awards, Gwen can be contacted at youthdev@volunteeringfife.org



Training

For information on FREE training courses, including in-house and training tailored to your organisation's needs, plus information on accreditation: contact Mary Ray, Training Co-ordinator on 07717 390214, mary.ray@volunteeringfife.org

Support into volunteering

To find out about the Give Something Back project in Central and West Fife contact Jacquie Mellon on 01592 645540 gsbcentral@volunteeringfife.org or Biff McMahon on 01383 732136 gsb@volunteeringfife.org

MV Award Scheme: Gwen Young youthdev@volunteeringfife.org

16+ Learning Choices Linda Turnbull, youth@volunteeringfife.org

For general enquiries: contact your local Volunteer Centre Fife office.

www.volunteeringfife.org

For info on every aspect of volunteering - advice about benefits, expenses, Disclosures, preparing to volunteer, links to other voluntary organisations, information on volunteering opportunities throughout Fife