

# Recruiting and Retaining Volunteers across the Generations

Opportunities for Improving Generational  
Diversity within the UC Master Food  
Preserver Program Volunteer Community

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UC Master Gardener Program

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Program Coordinator  
UC Master Food Preserver Program



**University of California**  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

# Goal 9 of the UC ANR Strategic Plan: Improve Volunteer Engagement



Scale	Overall	MG	4-H	MPP
<b>Motivation</b>				
Values	5.44	5.44	5.44	5.49
Career	2.62	2.47	2.96	2.62
Protective	3.42	3.53	3.20	3.30
Social	4.15	4.09	4.33	3.96
Understanding	5.28	5.43	4.92	5.52
Enhancement	4.36	4.44	4.15	4.43
<b>Satisfaction</b>				
Participation efficacy	5.53	5.58	5.41	5.47
Organizational support	5.36	5.54	4.93	5.33
Group integration	5.69	5.75	5.57	5.67
Empowerment	5.42	5.61	4.97	5.42

### Adult Volunteer Code of Conduct

We appreciate your volunteer service to the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR) and the valuable link you provide to local communities. When in the course and scope of your duties, you are considered an agent of the University of California (UC) and have the following rights and responsibilities.

**Your Responsibilities:**

1. Maintain a professional presence and dress when acting as a volunteer (see California 4-H Dress Guidelines).
2. Recognize, honor and uphold the responsibility and authority of the statewide and local program staff in setting program priorities, standards and direction.
3. Be committed to the core values, educational goals, and quality standards of the statewide program.
4. Respect and safeguard the individual rights, talents, safety, and property of program participants.
5. Take personal responsibility for the resolution of any interpersonal conflict that may arise, whether with fellow volunteers, program participants, program staff and/or other UC personnel; thereby demonstrating positive conflict resolution skills to all involved.
6. Prohibit discrimination against or harassment of any person in any statewide program or statewide program activity (see UC ANR Nondiscrimination and Affirmative Action Policy).
7. When driving on UC business, possess a valid California driver's license and carry proof of the minimum automobile liability insurance required by UC and ensure that all passengers use seat belts.
8. Report volunteer hours on a regular basis as required by the statewide program (see UC Master Food Preserver Policy Handbook, and UC Master Gardener Policy Handbook).
9. Follow UC guidance for all program financial matters and provide receipts for any money collected in the name of UC.
10. Adhere to and help enforce program policies and procedures referred to in the Policy Handbook (see 4-H Policy Handbook, UC Master Food Preserver Policy Handbook, and UC Master Gardener Policy Handbook).
11. Be recognized as an agent of the UC when working in the course and scope of your volunteer duties by wearing your program name badge (see 4-H Policy Handbook, UC Master Food Preserver Policy Handbook, and UC Master Gardener Policy Handbook).

**Your Rights:**

1. To be respected by program staff.
2. To have access to current program materials, training, and curriculum to support program delivery.
3. To be informed of any infraction that may or does result in corrective action or dismissal from the program.
4. To make written complaints concerning statewide programs, policies or personnel as described in the Policy Handbook (see 4-H Policy Handbook, UC Master Food Preserver Policy Handbook, and UC Master Gardener Policy Handbook).

The following are prohibited when acting on behalf of a UC ANR statewide program:

Created on February 13, 2017 Updated Mar. 2017

## Volunteer Conflict Resolution Manual

Revised March 2018

### Resources:

- Building Volunteer Engagement eExtension course (and Volunteer Engagement Action Plan)
- Volunteer Motivation and Satisfaction Research (2<sup>nd</sup> year)
- UC ANR Adult Volunteer Code of Conduct
- UC ANR Conflict Resolution Manual



# Today's Objective

- To share results of research on the motivation/needs of volunteers across generations
- To identify changes/shifts in programs and practices that will increase volunteer recruitment and improve volunteer retention



# Cooperative Extension Experts in Generational Diversity and Strategic Volunteer Engagement



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# What is a generation?

a group of people born and living  
during the same time



# Age Cohorts

- 1909-1924 – Builders
- 1925-1945 – Silent Generation
- 1946-1964 – Baby Boomers
- 1965-1980 – Gen X
- 1981-1996 – Millennials
- 1997-Present – Gen Z



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# Age Cohorts

- 1925-1945 – Silent Generation – age 74 to 89
- 1946-1964 – Baby Boomers – age 55 to 73
- 1965-1980 – Gen X – age 39 to 54
- 1981-1996 – Millennials – age 23 to 38



# Generational Differences?

## Which generation is associated with ...

- Valuing thriftiness
- Egoism
- Group-orientation
- Focus on self
- Skepticism
- Being cautious
- Questioning authority
- Serious
- Caring about balance
- Caring about competition

## Which generation ...

- Is the largest?
- Volunteers the most?
- Is the wealthiest?
- Has the highest voting rate?
- Is the most fun?

US Census Bureau, PEW, MSU



# Age Cohorts

- 1925-1945 – Silent Generation
- 1946-1964 – Baby Boomers
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# Age Cohorts

- 1925-1945 – Silent Generation
- 1946-1964 – Baby Boomers
- 1965-1980 – Gen X
- 1981-2000 – Millennials 83 mil or ~26% of pop

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- 1925-1945 – Silent Generation 29 mil. / ~9% of pop
- 1946-1964 – Baby Boomers 75 mil. / ~23% of pop
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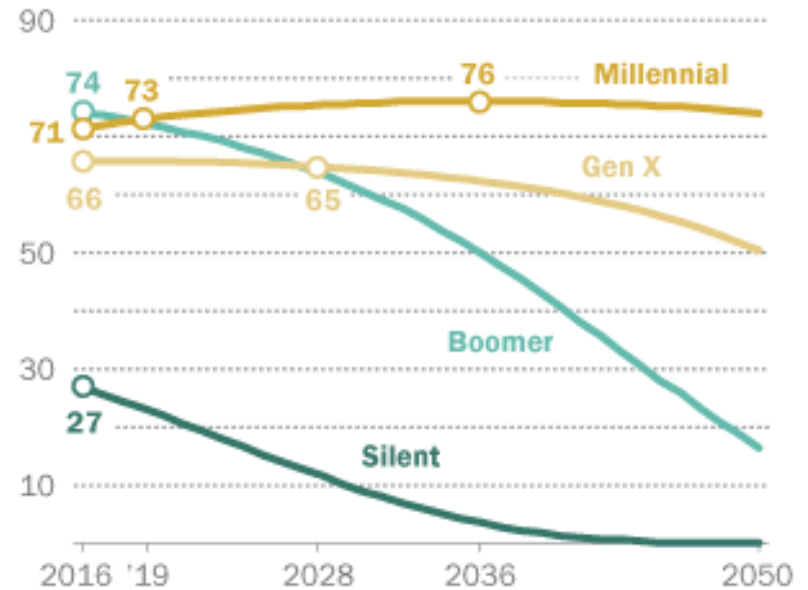


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# Millennials now outnumber Baby Boomers

## Projected population by generation

*In millions*



Note: Millennials refer to the population ages 20 to 35 as of 2016.

Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of U.S. Census Bureau population projections released December 2014 and 2016 population estimates.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



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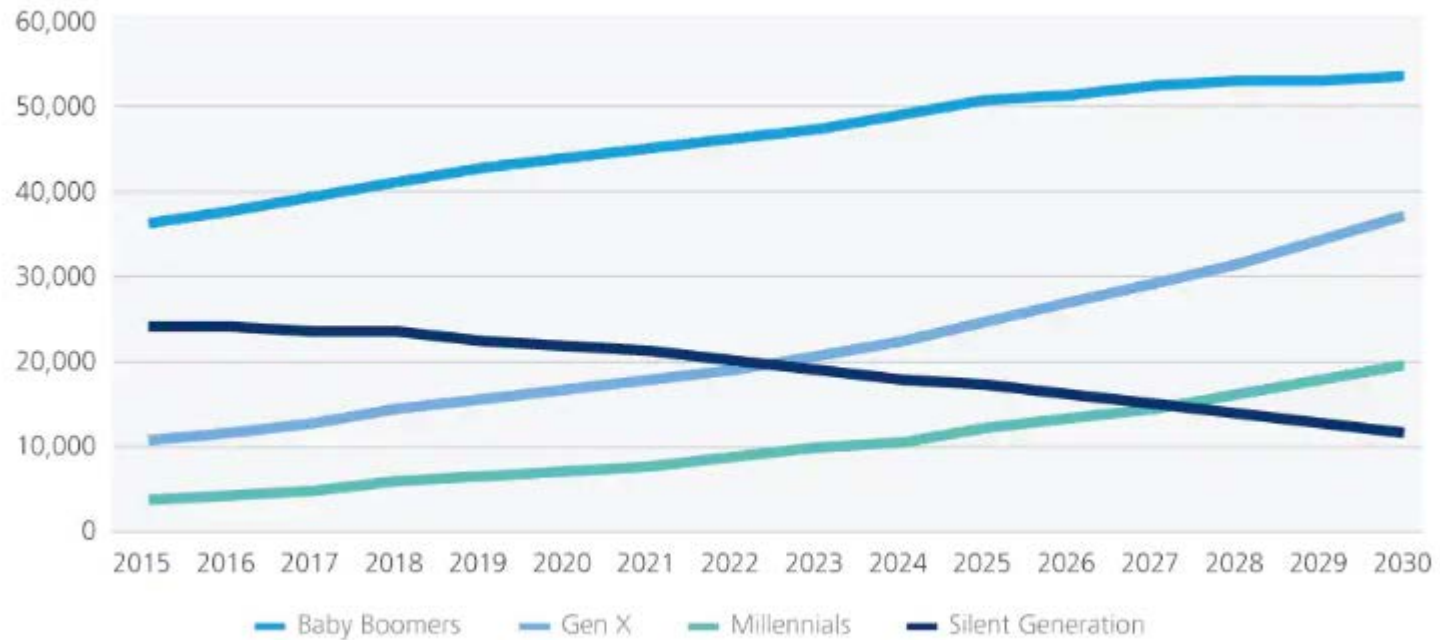
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# Baby boomers continue to be the wealthiest generation

Figure 7. Net wealth, all generations (\$ billion)



Source: Deloitte Center for Financial Services.

Graphic: Deloitte University Press | DUPress.com



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- Focus on self – Baby Boomer
- Skepticism – Gen X
- Being cautious – Silent
- Questioning authority – Baby Boomer
- Serious – Gen X
- Caring about balance – Gen X
- Caring about competition – Baby Boomer

Vetterm





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# Silent Generation

1925 - 1945

## Characteristics

- Successful
- Considerate
- Quiet but industrious
- Cautious

## Values

- Self-reliance
- Thriftiness
- Discipline
- Loyalty
- Family/community

Vettern





Alameda County



Amador County



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# Baby Boomers

1946 - 1964

## Characteristics

- Educated
- Independent
- Desire quality
- Cause-oriented
- Question authority
- Resourceful
- Economically secure

## Values

- Work
- Personal gratification
- Focus on self
- Health
- Competition

Vettern





Alameda County



Contra Costa County



# Gen X

1965-1980

## Characteristics

- Self-reliant
- Stressed
- Serious
- **Skeptical**
- Entrepreneurial

## Values

- Diversity
- Global thinking
- **Balance**
- Technological literacy
- Informality

Vettern





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# Millennials

1981 - 1996

## Characteristics

- Ambitious but seeking guidance
- Individualistic yet group oriented
- Busy
- Optimistic but concerned about the future
- Multitasking
- Economically insecure

## Values

- Civic engagement
- Social and environmental justice
- Education
- Achievement
- Diversity
- Technology

Vetterm





# Jig Saw Learning



In your table groups ...

- Draw a card from the center of the pile
- Flip it over to reveal your age cohort identity:
  - Silent/Traditionalist
  - Baby Boomer
  - Gen Xer
  - Millennial
- Find the group associated with your age cohort



# Jig Saw Learning

In your age cohort groups brainstorm ...

- Two ways to **recruit** folks that align with age cohort motivations and address age cohort hindrances
- Two ways to **restructure** your volunteer program to respond to needs for flexibility and short-term volunteer opportunities
- Two ways to **recognize** the contributions of volunteers (in your chosen cohort)



# Handout 1

## Silent Generation

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# Handout 2

A Guide to Engaging Volunteers Across Generations				
	Millennials	Generation X	Baby Boomers	Silents/Builders (Traditionalists)
<b>Motivation to volunteer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Egoistic motivation</li> <li>Working with friends and relatives</li> <li>Giving back</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Altruistic motivation</li> <li>To be involved with community</li> <li>Being involved with their children</li> <li>Focus on a meaningful cause</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Altruistic motivation</li> <li>Address a community need</li> <li>Sense of accomplishment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Altruistic motivation</li> <li>Following the example set by parents</li> <li>Sense of being needed</li> </ul>
<b>Hindrances to volunteering</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time conflicts/lack of flexibility</li> <li>Personal conflict with other volunteers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time conflicts due to family and work</li> <li>People with negative attitudes toward others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time conflicts/lack of flexibility</li> <li>Lack of organizational structure and vision</li> <li>Poor treatment of volunteers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time conflicts/lack of flexibility</li> <li>Unclear objectives</li> <li>Health</li> </ul>
<b>Motivation to continue with volunteer efforts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enjoyment of the work</li> <li>Enjoy the people they work with and those they help</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to help the community</li> <li>Being involved in their children's activities</li> <li>Enjoy the people with whom they work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sense of accomplishment</li> <li>Feel needed and appreciated</li> <li>Their talents and skills are beneficial to the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help the community to survive</li> <li>Socialization</li> <li>Feel needed – an asset to the community</li> </ul>
<b>Actions volunteer professionals can change or improve to ensure continued volunteerism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flexibility</li> <li>Be respectful and caring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate frequently with volunteers</li> <li>Expand the volunteer base</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appreciation for volunteer efforts</li> <li>Expand the volunteer base</li> <li>Clear communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand the volunteer base</li> <li>Clear communication</li> </ul>
<b>Most important factors in retaining volunteers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appreciation for their efforts</li> <li>Worthwhile purpose</li> <li>Comfortable environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appreciation for the efforts of the group</li> <li>Sense of accomplishment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appreciation for their efforts</li> <li>Sense of accomplishment</li> <li>Flexibility with time demands</li> <li>Adult learning opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worthwhile projects</li> <li>Sense of accomplishment</li> </ul>



# Handout 3



## Restructuring Existing Volunteer Opportunities

### Six ways to restructure volunteer opportunities to appeal to volunteers seeking more flexible and shorter term opportunities

1. **Substitution.** If it just has to be done every day, week or month, try creating the position of *substitute*: volunteers who are willing to be on-call and fill-in temporarily for volunteers in traditional jobs as their schedules permit.
2. **Job Sharing.** Why not assign two volunteers to the same opportunity? They may be given the same responsibilities, or different ones depending on their individual skills. You might identify the two volunteers to job share or you could ask the new volunteer to recruit a job-sharing friend. The volunteers follow a prearranged schedule or work it out among themselves week by week.
3. **Rotation.** With this option four volunteers might take turns filling a volunteer assignment, each working for a period of just three months out of the year. Such an arrangement might work well for snowbirds or seasonal workers.
4. **Segmentation.** Can a labor intensive position be broken down into more manageable short-term opportunities? For example, a special event coordinator might be replaced by several short-term volunteers each working on one piece of the overall work plan.
5. **Team Volunteering.** Assign multiple volunteers to the same client, each having a specialized function. For example, instead of just one volunteer being assigned to a homebound senior, a care team is created. Perhaps one volunteer likes giving emotional support, another handling finances and a third doing housecleaning. No one volunteer has to do it all -- making the load lighter for everyone.
6. **Telecommuting.** In this scenario, a volunteer provides the service from home or some other off-site location using technology. A good example of the application of this strategy is in the area of mentoring. School-based mentoring can be a fairly inflexible assignment. However, volunteers who cannot go into the school on a regular basis can still participate through e-mentoring, the exchange of e-mails over the Internet. Whether the volunteer is at work, overseas on vacation or at home, all they need to do is to get on their laptop and send off an e-mail to their mentee. E-mentoring is not a replacement for face-to-face mentoring, but it can be a way to involve a greater range of volunteers in the experience.

*From "Creating Boomer-friendly Volunteer Opportunities: Restructuring Existing Opportunities" by D. Scott Martin. (<http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/node/17770>)*



# Handout 4



## Volunteer Recognition Ideas Across the Generations

Here are tips from leaders of volunteers at MAVA workshop on what they have found for recognition preferences in the different generations.

### Traditionalists Born before 1946

- If give an item, give something useful
- Make donation in honor of them
- Service pins are popular
- Honor years of service
- Many like recognition parties

### Boomers Born 1946-1964

- No trinkets or meaningless stuff
- Like training opportunities
- Like thank you for organizational leaders
- Promote to new opportunities. Offer leadership of a project.
- Send "insider" information – such as advanced notice of new Executive Director hiring or including in organizational communication
- Provide name tags like staff have
- Send thank you to their family for sharing their time with the organization.
- Some like to be highlighted in newsletters, on website, etc.
- Mixed reaction on recognition parties – some like the networking and some feel to busy to attend

### Generation X Born 1965-1980

- Send note to their works supervisor
- Give business cards for volunteer position
- Offer to be a reference
- Acknowledge in news or other ways that are public
- Add to their network, help make a connection, introductions
- Offer opportunity to develop skill or skill set
- Spontaneous email thank you
- Give volunteer positions interesting titles
- Provide electronic logo that could add to website

### Generation Y/ Millennials Born 1981- ?

- Offer reference letter
- Give feedback – this generation loves feedback
- Offer to take to meetings for networking opportunities
- Offer information interview with position(s) in organization
- Offer increased responsibility or a challenge
- Gift cards popular
- Like verbal thank you.
- Give increased responsibility, a leadership role or a project to be in charge of
- Many do not like traditional recognition parties
- Handwritten notes

© Minnesota Association for Volunteer Administration (MAVA) 2010



# Bonus Handout



Navigate to ...

[https://www.ndcompass.org/trends/ask-a-researcher/Rachelle\\_Vettern\\_October\\_2018.php](https://www.ndcompass.org/trends/ask-a-researcher/Rachelle_Vettern_October_2018.php)

... to read Dr. Vettern's blog post summarizing her recent research

**TRENDS**  
Major trends  
Data Highlight  
Infographics  
Updated Data  
For discussion  
Ask a researcher

You are here: Home » Trends

## ASK A RESEARCHER

October 2018

### Engaging Volunteers across Generations

Rachelle Vettern is an Associate Professor and the Leadership and Volunteer Development Specialist for North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension. In her Extension role, she conducts research and provides education for youth and adults in the areas of leadership, ethics, generations, youth development, and volunteer development. She works with both the NDSU Extension Center for 4-H Youth Development and Family and Community Wellness. In her faculty role, she teaches online classes for the NDSU Great Plains Interactive Distance Education Alliance (IDEA) Youth Development master's program. She has her B.A. in Psychology and her M.S. in Counseling and Human Resource Development from South Dakota State University. Her Ph.D. is in Counselor Education and Supervision from North Dakota State University. In this article, Rachelle offers insight into engaging volunteers coming from a variety of generations, which resulted from a previous NDSU research study.

"Who is going to coach youth softball next summer? Who can we find to help with the community fall festival? How do we find volunteers for our faith community events, 4-H club, Scouts?" As community members, we have all heard these questions in our rural and urban areas across North Dakota. Volunteers are vital to any community, so what are the strategies we can use to encourage our North Dakota citizens to volunteer?

**ASK A RESEARCHER ARCHIVE**

- Ina Cernusca: Key demographic trends in North Dakota August 2019
- Karen Olson: The 30th edition of the Anne E. Casey Foundation's KIDS COUNT® Data Book finds that 175,772 children will shape the future of a more diverse North Dakota July 2019
- Shivela Arsl Srivastava & Dr. Ann Burnett: "Giving rope and pulling it back": Parental dilemmas to prevent adolescent substance use June 2019
- Ina Cernusca: 2019 Compass Points: Setting direction for improving the quality of life in North Dakota May 2019
- Joshua Manheau and Onnolee Nordstrom: Learning from Fargo – An Exploration of the Fargo-Moorhead Entrepreneurial Ecosystem March 2019
- Nancy Hodur: Improving Oral Health for Older Adults in North Dakota November 2018
- Rachelle Vettern: Engaging Volunteers across Generations October 2018



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# Jig Saw Learning

In your table groups brainstorm ...

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Return to your ORIGINAL table group and ...

- Share an idea that arose from your age cohort discussions
- Of these ideas, identify 1 or 2 ideas that surprise, intrigue, or inspire your group





# Jig Saw Learning



Return to your ORIGINAL table group and ...

- Share an idea that arose from your age cohort discussions
- Of these ideas, identify 1 or 2 ideas that surprise, intrigue, or inspire your group
- If you hold the **Silent Generation** card in your group, prepare to share



# Organizational Blind Spots?

UC ANR Volunteer Motivation and Satisfaction – Year One Data

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# Extend Your Learning



- Visit the Sterling Volunteer website and view Beth Steinhorn's [webinar on Generational Trends in Volunteerism](#)
- Read the [PEW Research Center's](#) work on Millennials
- Check out Michigan State University's article on [Volunteer Recognition by Generation](#)
- Read:
  - [Generations at Work: Managing the Clash of Boomers, Gen Xers, and Gen Yers in the Workplace](#) by Ron Zemke, Claire Raines, and Bob Fililczak
  - [The New Breed: Understanding and Equipping the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Volunteer](#) by Jonathan McKee and Thomas W. McKee



# References

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