Volunteer Core Team Circle

Philosophy

Mobile Loaves & Fishes believes that the most effective management strategy on a Primary Community level is that of the Volunteer Core Team Circle. This structure is one composed of an entirely volunteer leadership and begins with a catalyst; a person that precipitates an event or change. There is no hierarchy and it is not dictatorial. It is meant to be collaborative and entrepreneurial. Volunteers dedicated to the mission of MLF are encouraged to take on varying roles of leadership within the circle. No role is territorial in nature. The time commitment to being a part of the core team circle can be significant. Potential circle members need to discern their commitment carefully knowing that a significant number of hours will be dedicated to MLF. When fully operational, an MLF truck will have between 500 to 800 volunteers serving 25,000 meals per year with a truck going out virtually every night of the week with an operating budget in excess of $50,000. Management of the Primary Community should be outside the jurisdiction of the staff of the local hosting community but unquestionably under the spiritual leadership of the pastor. It is recommended that you include a mix of retired or flexible volunteers into your core team to help ease the efforts of those with less flexible schedules. It would be beneficial to pull in talents of all kinds. Initially the core team will meet weekly during startup and tapering to twice per month two months after the truck is planted then to once per month. Sub committees can meet as needed then report to the core team. The chart below reflects the philosophy of the Volunteer Core Team Circle.
Volunteer Core Team Catalyst – Typically, this role is established early on when the prospective Primary Community is discerning its desire to have MLF in its community. Someone feels the passion of engaging at this level in serving our brothers and sisters in need. This person needs to have a strong collaborative style of leadership. This person would help guide the Primary Community through its discernment process. This is the person(s) that will precipitate change and whose energy causes others to be enthusiastic about Mobile Loaves & Fishes. From initial contact to the point of receiving a truck in their community could take 6 months or longer. Once the truck is planted, the Volunteer Core Team Catalyst(s) could expect to spend about 15 - 20 hours per week in service for about two months until the ministry is stabilized. It is highly recommended that this role be shared by at least two people. This person will interface with circle members in other Primary Communities in their area as well as interface with MLF circle members in Austin.

Accounting/Bookkeeping – This volunteer position must be internet-literate and familiar with the QuickBooks suite of products. Accounting/bookkeeping background is very important. The person will record all deposits and pay all bills using Mobile Loaves & Fishes accounting system. An experienced bookkeeper can expect to spend 5 hours per month on this task. This person will interface with MLF, Inc.’s corporate bookkeeping staff.

Fund Raising – This person will be responsible for implementing the fund raising strategy developed by the core team. Running at a full schedule the person will need to raise at least $50,000 to $60,000 per year. The fundraising strategy will need to be well thought out and diverse. MLF, Inc. has developed a sample strategy that can act as a template to help guide the efforts. The strategy will include one large annual fundraising event, perhaps a second collection, direct mail and an end of year appeal. Time commitment will be significant and will vary depending on the stage of implementation of the strategy. Major fundraisers require a major time commitment.

Volunteer Coordinator(s) – This is probably the most intensive management element of the core team. It is recommended that three people fill this role. This team will need to be internet-literate and become very familiar with the MLF Volunteer Management and Mapping System. Much of the work is repetitive. Initially he or she will be responsible for entering in all volunteers into the database, creating teams and adding volunteers to their respective teams. Once team information is inputted, this person will be responsible for record maintenance. Initially he or she will be involved at least 15 hours per week and tapering off to 3 or 4 hours once the operation is up and running smoothly. Training of all Make Ready and Truck teams is part of the responsibilities.

Commissary Management – This person is responsible for maintaining the commissary and ensuring that adequate food supplies are available for each run each week. This person will coordinate with the wholesale food supplier and order food on a weekly basis. Commissary management also includes seeing that all products are laid out ready for the Make Ready team each day. Three hours per week is the anticipated time commitment. As you get into operating on a full schedule you may consider hiring part-time high school help to help in preparing the inventory for each Make Ready team.

Truck Maintenance – This person ensures that the truck is being maintained properly. This is the least intensive role of all.
**PR/Communications** – This person will be responsible for all public relations and communications for the core team. Duties may include working with local media to inform them of special activities of MLF. Additionally, this person will be responsible for providing information to MLF, Inc. for its monthly newsletter and also providing material to the Primary Community newsletter, bulletins etc. Estimated time is 3 hours per month.

**Spiritual Director** – This person is responsible for ensuring every person working at MLF is spiritually strengthened and focused on the fact that we are all working as part of the body of Christ. This director will understand all the roles above and will provide prayerful support and spiritual guidance.

**Volunteers** – You can anticipate between 500 to 800 volunteers manning all aspects of this ministry from truck teams, make ready teams to egg teams and bread teams. This is the strength of Mobile Loaves & Fishes; empowering and enabling people to serve the poorest of the poor in our respective communities by bringing dignity to the human person.