A New Partnership for ESOL Tutor Engagement
Massachusetts Service Alliance
Massachusetts Conference on Volunteerism
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Who we are -

Boston Cares & English for New Bostonians

Sara Hamilton, Boston Cares, Executive Director

Elsa Freer, Boston Cares, Associate Director of Programs

Diana Satin, English for New Bostonians, Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator
Who is in the room?

Share a challenge you are working on solving for one of your programs.

➔ Volunteer recruitment & retention
Finding volunteers that are the best fit to support the program needs

➔ Meeting needs of the programs and students you support

➔ Providing training
Our challenges:

**Boston Cares:** Volunteers were seeking flexibility, but non-profits were asking for training and commitment.

**English for New Bostonians:** ESOL programs were seeking ways to recruit and support more tutors to support the students they serve.
Our Solution:

“Flexible Commitment” - creating a team of volunteers who could collectively meet the needs of our partners. This started with an introductory training and agreeing to serve at least twice per month to start.
Partnership & Scale:

- Identifying a partner and building a relationship to co-manage a program
- Securing joint funding
- Growing program over time and adding more volunteers and sites each year
Training Volunteers

- Scaled-down length of initial training
- Monthly in-services
- Accessible - in person, webinar, blog

No compromise on level of professional development
Volunteer Recruitment & Management

Recruitment & training in partnership with English for New Bostonians

Establishing an intake process & explore best ways to make training accessible
Site Identification

Site Management

- On public transportation
- Have capacity to accept at least several volunteers
- Have staff available to provide support to volunteers and to be engaged with Allies staff

- Site visits
- Check-ins three times a year
- Close communication on needs and finding the best match of volunteers with programs
How do you build community within your program with volunteers, partners, and/or clients?
Community Building

Ideas from the group:
Events
Socials
Potlucks for students and volunteers together
Breakfast and lunch
Book club with tutors and students
Building Community

For partner sites:
- One-pager for programs
- Program manual
- Site check-ins & visits

In-house:
- Bi-weekly calls
- Quarterly meetings
- Shared Google Drive
- Trello
- Co-branded logo

For volunteers:
- One-pager for tutors
- Program guides
- In-services
- Coffee hours
- Appreciation events
- Monthly emails
Why this model worked for us:

- Since Sept 2017 151 volunteers have participated in more than 3,500 hours of tutoring and training

- Tutors have served more than 334 students at 11 ESOL program sites

“[Our tutor] is very helpful! She is friendly and helps us talk.” - A student

“We get really motivated tutors. They have made a commitment and are sincere about the commitment they've made.” - Michelle, director of partner site

“As the student improved her English skills, she was able to secure a better paying, more enjoyable job. It felt great to be a part of this positive impact on her life.”

- Liana, a tutor
Turn & Talk:

What barriers exist for your program?

How might you consider breaking them down?

Who could you partner with in your community to address the issues together?
Challenges & Lessons Learned

➔ Decide together how you will stay organized
Sharing documents across organizations; regular meetings

➔ Communication is key
Clearly identify who is doing what

➔ Program ownership
What is “ours” as a shared program vs. our individual organizations

➔ Relationship building
Learning each other’s organizational culture
Questions?

Sara Hamilton, shamilton@bostoncares.org

Elsa Freer, efreer@bostoncares.org

Diana Satin, dsatin@englishfornewbostonians.org