

Join me at the 2018 MAVA Conference

Sarah Berres

Working in the field of education, I spend a lot of time in training to understand our students' and teachers' needs. But how much is there to help develop our only volunteer coordinator, who is responsible for our foundation, outreach and communication? I've always struggled to see the full cost value of me attending these types of conferences when there is little that addresses my specific training desires and needs.

As volunteer managers, we are responsible for such diverse roles in our organizations and play a key part in their overall success. The 2017 National Summit hosted by MAVA was the first conference I attended that addressed each of my responsibilities and work roles. At this conference, every single person around me "got" what I did and why I do it. And most important to me, I was able to implement something from each of my sessions immediately after.

I successfully reasoned with my supervisor why I should be allowed to purchase a fairly costly volunteer training book. We have built a monthly volunteer training calendar for all staff. I took the lessons from my story telling session to improve some outreach I was working on. After the "Advocating for Your Cause" session, I talked with our director about how we can use volunteers to engage in lobbying for our organizational causes. And probably most importantly, I connected with volunteer managers from across the country, felt the passion from everyone around me and left feeling more energized than ever before to make the most of each day to create that positive influence I want to see in my community.

MAVA supports the needs of each volunteer manager, no matter your organization or how many "hats" you are wearing. There is a depth of content at the MAVA conference that focuses on your personal and professional development as a volunteer manager. At this conference, volunteer managers celebrate each other and the value we provide our communities. Anyone working with volunteers would benefit from this conference and I am looking forward already to another inspiring few days with people who "get" me.

I hope to see you at the 2018 MAVA Conference, Volunteer Engagement: Next Steps and Beyond. For more information visit mavanetwork.org/2018conference.

Sarah Berres
Volunteer Coordinator
Metro North Adult Basic Education