

## FCE Volunteering and Numbers – Judy Fullmer, January 26, 2020

**It's the time of year when FCE units/clubs are filling out their program books and planning projects for the year.** The end of the year brings filling out the reports. Can we make the connection between the two? Why is it important to plan? And why do we report what we have done during the year?

**Did you know that volunteers contribute \$203.4 billion (YES, BILLION) dollars to the United States through their volunteering?** (from the Independent Sector, April 2019) **The latest value of a volunteer hour is \$25.43.** This figure is released each year in April to coincide with National Volunteer Week, a program of Points of Light meant to celebrate the power and impact of volunteer service.

**Currently, about 63 million Americans volunteer about 8 billion hours of their time, talent, and effort to improve and strengthen their communities.** "Volunteerism has been a driving force in the strength and power of our civil society since this country's founding," said Dan Cardinali, President and CEO of Independent Sector. "We know that giving of our time, talent, and effort transforms organizations, communities, and our nation, and also has profound effects on the individuals giving their time. The Value of Volunteer Time gives us just one concrete measure to illustrate the power of individuals to transform communities." **"We believe the most powerful force of change in our world is the individual – one who takes action and makes a positive difference,"** said Natalye Paquin, President and CEO of Points of Light. "This data shows the value that volunteers bring to the sector and the world. When people use their talents and skills to take action and support of causes they care about, we can build a stronger, more just and equitable world." Greg Baldwin, CEO of VolunteerMatch said "As Americans, we are remarkable, and in 2018, **our generosity was greater than the profits of Facebook, Apple, Amazon and Google combined.** The freedom to voluntarily associate with the people, groups, and causes we care about is what makes democracy possible, but exercising that freedom is what makes democracies great."

**As members of FCE, we are a part of the volunteerism that takes place in the United States.** Planning our year lets us think about and concentrate on those projects and work that will benefit our communities. It does not always happen that way – sometimes the year is well started before we decide on a project. That is ok! We are flexible. But the best way is to think ahead and make plans so that as opportunities come up during the year we can take advantage of them.

**End of the year reports: The FCE Accomplishment Report Form is used to report the projects and the hours used to work on those projects. Changes for the 2020 Accomplishment Report will be that the tabulated data will be on the first page** (instead of being in the middle of the report). This is the information needed by the Area, State, and National officers. We hope you will fill out the first page – **tell us what lessons you presented, how many members and others you reached, the volunteer hours spent on the project, the number of people reached by media (fair booths, newspapers, internet) and any public officials you may have contacted.** If you are not working on an award, you do not need to fill out the rest of the Accomplishment Report – just the first page!! The information collected is then used to fill out reports at each level – Area, State, National and ACWW. These organizations use the information to write grants and to justify to government agencies the need for services. **By collecting and collating the information, we can amplify the voices of women, especially rural women, so that the problems they face and the solutions they raise are heard and acknowledged by international policy-makers and legislators.** Every three years, ACWW member societies submit a Triennial Report which details what their organization has done, what its priorities are, and what action has been taken to help achieve ACWW's aims and objectives. **The Accomplishment Report of each FCE club/unit helps along the way to compile these reports. If volunteers were not being active in their communities, many projects and work would not be done. Volunteers are a valuable part of their communities.**