

HONORS THESIS

# STRUGGLING WITH GHOSTING?

WHY VOLUNTEERS AND DONORS DO IT

HOW TO REKINDLE NON-PROFIT ENGAGEMENT

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## ABSTRACT

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WHY VOLUNTEERS AND DONORS DO IT

HOW TO REKINDLE NON-PROFIT ENGAGEMENT

Non-profit organizations actively address societal challenges and improve lives. However, sustaining volunteer and donor recruitment and retention remains challenging. This thesis explores the complications that arise in acquiring and engaging volunteers and donors long-term, specifically focusing on the National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP) Chapter at Colorado State University (CSU), and the broader organization of NMDP. The analysis examines psychological motivators, such as Self Determination Theory, which drive individuals to perform altruistic acts. This thesis highlights constraints that prevent individuals from volunteering or donating – barriers extending beyond recruitment. These include a lack of education, structural deficiencies, institutional mistrust, cultural hesitancy, and systematic limitations within the healthcare sector. Additionally, the examination investigates the role of the medical industry, particularly how burnout affects engagement. Recognizing these issues is the first step toward proposing effective solutions.

People naturally want to help others when given the capability and opportunity. Adjustments must occur to correct limitations individuals currently face during onboarding and the conversation process. Proposed solutions include effective communication, social media engagement, and psychology-backed techniques such as the Door-in-the-Face and Foot-in-the-Door strategies to drive participation. Accentuating community interaction through proper training and information fosters confidence and promotes workplace sustainability. Evaluating the global significance associated with donor recruitment and retention provides insights beyond the scope of NMDP. This thesis offers a framework for various non-profit organizations and companies seeking to improve

their own recruitment and retention efforts. Altruism alone will not change the world, but a system empowering it can – and will.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

What is your passion in life? My Great Aunt Eleanor asked me this question last year. At first, I did not know how to respond to such a broad question. However, after reflecting on what fulfills me, I realized my passion is helping others. From a very young age, I carried Neosporin, bandages, and other items someone might need in a crisis. This habit perplexed my family since it wasn't something they instilled or instructed their four-year-old to do. My answer to the age-old question, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" came from seeing a homeless man living under a bridge. As I grew older and became aware of moral issues surrounding the medical field, I realized there were other ways to help people. After settling into Colorado State University (CSU), I attended a blood drive that hosted the National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP), previously called Be the Match. At that time, CSU did not have an NMDP chapter, and an NMDP employee was there alone. After learning about the program, I knew I wanted to become involved. Alongside another student, I founded the NMDP Chapter at CSU.

Since the chapter's creation in the fall of 2022, we have added over 2,300 individuals to the national stem cell registry, now known globally as the NMDP registry. This registry compiles a list of people who have agreed to be potential matches for individuals with blood cancer and blood diseases in critical condition. This situation arises when a patient's treatment – such as chemotherapy, radiation, immunotherapy, etc. – fails, leaving stem cell therapy as their last option. Finding matches is difficult because they typically only occur among individuals with similar ethnic background. As a result, the likelihood of protein markers matching closely enough for donation is approximately one in 432, and this rate decreases when ethnic diversity increases. Consequently, the registry is now the world's largest hematopoietic (stem cell) registry, with over 41 million people on it across 80 different countries. Despite this extensive network, the matching rate remains low. This emphasizes the importance of recruiting and retaining donors, a task growing increasingly difficult.

The NMDP Chapter at CSU has grown to become the second highest-performing chapter in the country. NMDP measures performance by the number of individuals added to the registry, meaning, CSU excels in donor recruitment. Furthermore, the chapter provides philanthropic support to organizations such as Farmhouse, Delta Sigma Pi, Kappa Alpha Theta, Phi Delta Theta, Beta Theta Pi, Nu Alpha Kappa, Tau Kappa Epsilon, and Chi Omega. Beyond collaborating with the Panhellenic and Interfraternity Councils, the chapter partners with the CSU student government (ASCSU), CSU Sales Club, and Camp Kesem. Additionally, a key collaborator is RamStrength, a Northern Colorado-based organization providing financial assistance to cancer survivors. As mentioned earlier, NMDP not only adds individuals to the registry but also collaborates with medical organizations like Vitalant, a non-profit blood services provider. Together, we have co-hosted over 15 blood drives and amassed over 500 units of blood. Though I am no longer majoring in biomedical sciences, my core motivation of helping others remains unchanged.

Through NMDP Chapter at CSU, I can continue pursuing that passion while giving others the opportunity to keep living theirs. It takes only one person joining the registry to save someone's life. That someone could be a toddler battling Leukemia, a high school senior fighting Multiple Myeloma, or a grandparent struggling with Sickle Cell Disease. Society often views these cases externally, distant from personal experience, but what happens when the patient is your parent, child, or friend? Every searching patient is someone's loved one, and a match cannot occur without a donor, who cannot be found without volunteers to register them. Enrollment and engagement of donors and volunteers have steadily declined in non-profit organizations in recent years, prompting an examination into the impetus behind this harrowing trend. The following chapters observe the challenges, limitations, solutions, and global significance associated with the analyzed data. The findings in this thesis extend beyond medically focused non-profit organizations by offering insight into effective strategies for onboarding and maintaining volunteers and donors. My personal experiences and knowledge of NMDP shape this paper, I take responsibility for the views and interpretations expressed, and they do not represent the official stance or policies of NMDP. I review findings primarily within the context of NMDP. Nonetheless, the subsequent information

remains relevant to countless non-profit organizations, yielding a framework to improve recruitment, retention, and engagement strategies.

# Chapter 2

## Challenges and Limitations

### 2.1 The Struggle of Being a Volunteer

To volunteer means choosing to give up one's time in support of a cause one believes is worthwhile. In some cases, external factors motivate individuals to volunteer, such as incentives or instructions, especially when another organization requires it to fulfill certain obligations. Nonetheless, reoccurring volunteers often act without extraneous motivators and participate of their own free will. In the context of non-profit organizations, which do not operate on a reward-based system, what makes people stay? Additionally, when these individuals stop donating their time for reasons unrelated to external factors – such as moving or arising work obligations – what influences that decision?

The Self Determination Theory (SDT) evaluates the proponents that influence non-profit contributions. According to SDT, humans require three psychological needs to feel fulfilled in their efforts: autonomy – the sense of control over one's self and actions; competence – the knowledge that one is capable and effective; and relatedness – the feeling of belonging. When volunteers meet these needs, they feel satisfied and become intrinsically motivated (De Clerck et al., 2019). Conversely, when a plan offers too little or too much independence, undermines one's sense of capability, or fails to provide connection with others, volunteers grow frustrated. When a position does not meet their expectations, they often choose to leave. If volunteers persist under these conditions, extrinsic forces – such as obligation – typically drive them. Furthermore, these dynamics often reveal themselves in the statistics following an event or goal.

Moreover, organizations must equip volunteers and place them in environments conducive to growth. If a volunteer lacks support, they eventually fail and disengage from the program. Organizations must establish a structure to educate and inform volunteers to ensure they know what to expect and how to handle the responsibilities they may face on the job. Additionally, people

naturally identify role models throughout new experiences, especially while learning. Board members serve as leaders and represent the organization, giving them the power to significantly impact those they interact with. When they treat volunteers with encouragement and kindness, they help those individuals find the work meaningful and remain engaged with the organization. A stable, informative structure and active, supportive leadership often determine whether volunteers stay or leave – even when they meet all other preceding needs.

Volunteers leave organizations for many reasons, even when leadership possesses strong qualities. Researchers documented the strengths and weaknesses of five non-profit healthcare leaders in the Southwestern United States (Hudson, 2021). One frontrunner held a strong vision but failed to implement new strategies effectively, which ultimately drove people away. Another pioneer was a highly effective communicator who faced resource constraints, paving the way for competition to prevail. Thereafter, a separate trendsetter relied heavily on data to drive their success but overlooked the emotional aspect of engagement, which led to a bleak outlook and a low morale among participants. Likewise, an alternate flagbearer showed great support but resisted change, relying on a bleak outlook and low morale. Finally, an innovator introduced groundbreaking ideas, but implemented them in rapid succession, resulting in burnout and a high turnover rate. These examples show that many factors determine whether organizations engage and retain volunteers. Unfortunately, there is no magic switch that can be flipped to fix disengagement.

Although one can take steps to propagate their fulfillment and passions for being present, fostering a supportive and encouraging environment is essential for long-term engagement. Within NMDP, volunteers receive the same respect as donors. Therefore, volunteers feel valued, which reflects throughout the organization and impacts how potential donors perceive the registry and the idea of joining it. When volunteers trust their organization and believe in the impact, potential donors are more likely to adopt the same mentality. Consequently, those matched for donation are more inclined to say “yes” when they share this confidence. Nevertheless, donors face their own set of challenges that can impact both their recruitment and retention.

## 2.2 The Barriers to Donation

To be a donor means to give – whether it be time, money, or through biological materials. In this thesis, the term “donor” specifically refers to someone who is transferring their own biomedical material to another. Finding a suitable match poses an inherent challenge, with a general probability of 1 in 432. This is exacerbated by barriers in donor acquisition and sustainability, which prevents willing individuals from joining the registry. The recent decline in donor activity does not stem from an absence of desire to help. Instead, it is a consequence of inadequately educating the individual when the chance arises. People naturally want to help when they feel informed and empowered to act.

Conversely, when there is a lack of confidence in the medical system that becomes an obstacle when attempting to amass and manage donor satisfaction and involvement. During the global pandemic of COVID-19, a wave of collective hysteria spread. Paralyzed by fear, many people didn’t know how to respond. Their faith in medical institutions and procedures decreased. In the realm of blood donation, this led to a 25% overall decline, with certain regions seeing drops as high as 71%. Granted, certain populations experienced a 2-10% increase, but those circles were smaller, and thus, more manageable (Kumar et al. 2023). Recovering from any event of that magnitude and timespan is arduous, and ultimately, an ongoing process. Additional factors continue to inflame this comeback, as discussed in the subsequent subchapter. Though this dilemma does affect all donors, it disproportionately affects certain groups.

On the National Stem Cell Registry, also known as the NMDP Registry, there is an underrepresentation of multiethnic individuals. For this reason, diverse individuals often have a harder time finding a match than their fair-skinned counterpart. Upon scrutinizing the constraints in finding matched donors in multicultural groups, Galen E. Switzer discovered a prevailing mistrust surrounding the use of medical information and the donation process. Alas, this mistrust is not surprising, considering the historical and cultural treatment many of these groups have experienced. What’s more, hesitancy surrounding blood donation often extends to the broader medical field (Prince and Piatak, 2022). When exploring the roots of this skepticism, one does not need

to search far. Medical care in the U.S. can be exorbitantly expensive and it is common to find additional fees on bills. Insurance companies can be difficult to navigate, and when coupled with language barriers that culturally diverse individuals may have, it is comprehensible how it may confuse one or make one feel uncertain about the process. Not to mention, citizen or visa restrictions might apply, and care might be provided at a surcharge – or not offered at all for those without it.

When organizations, such as NMDP, claim to cover all donor-related costs it could be viewed as being too good to be true, causing a potential member to turn away due to historical experience and lingering doubt. These hurdles can be difficult to overcome not only in medical services, but also in donor eligibility. Consequently, if one has been denied a medical opportunity due to donor deferral policies, they are unlikely to try another opportunity – even with a different organization or cause (Witlock, Monforte, Hustinx, 2021). This is an issue that NMDP Chapter at CSU has faced before. Medical eligibility requirements for stem cell donation differ from those for whole blood, meaning that someone ineligible to donate whole blood, might still qualify to donate stem cells. However, many people do not understand this distinction and leave before learning the difference. Furthermore, religious or cultural notions can impact one's stance on biomedical transfers. Individuals tend to align with their beliefs and pre-conceived concepts, and when an objective – such as donating – contradicts with those ideals, they usually default to what feels true to them. Therefore, in these circumstances, the person in question chooses not to join, and organizations can do little to change their mind. This reluctance, along with the aforementioned qualms about the medical field, is something medical professionals regularly encounter in their workplace.

## **2.3 The Constraints of the Medical Field**

To act altruistically is to act selflessly, it means prioritizing someone else's well-being over your own. Many constituents who practice medicine are driven by this quality, guiding them toward a career in healthcare where they can make a meaningful difference. Altruism often serves as the

foundational motivation behind one's decision to enter such a demanding field. Yet, what happens when these experts experience burnout? This phenomenon, often arising from chronic overwork and emotional strain, has led to an epidemic of altruistic loss among students and physicians alike (Vearrier, 2020). In this study, researchers used the Enlightened Self-Interest in Altruism (ESIA) framework to assess practicing clinicians. This model evaluates the balance of ego and altruism, both of which are necessary for a long career in the healthcare sector. Hence, when one outweighs the other, fatigue often follows – either from emotional exhaustion or losing passion for one's action. As a result, burnout rates exceed 50% across the health and wellness industry. In the same way volunteers influence donors, specialists experiencing burnout can undermine the care their patients receive.

This matter is as concerning as it sounds. When practitioners are in this state, the quality of care they impart significantly decreases. For patient, this means they face a greater chance of experiencing medical errors will occur. These mistakes can be minor, in which case, they likely cause no long-term harm and seem permissible. Conversely, larger oversights can lead to misdiagnoses that last for years and, in the worst scenarios, result in someone's demise. What's more, even small faults leave lasting impressions, and when enough of them accumulate, they can weigh as heavily as the serious ones. Over time, this fosters patient dissatisfaction, and if the care remains inadequate enough, skepticism can arise. Rather than limit their judgment to the specific worker, or workers involved, individuals often overgeneralize their experience. Thus, they project their discontent onto the entire medical profession which perpetuates wariness when someone asks them to volunteer for a healthcare-related organization or join a medical registry.

## Chapter 3

### Solutions for Improvement

Humans form habits and seek social connections. When someone identifies another as being like them – no matter how the extent – they welcome that person into the group. People designate this circle as safe; they recognize its members as similar and therefore not a threat. However, when there is not a connection or similarities, they are kept outside of the group as they are seen as a potential hazard. The Social Identity Theory explains this behavior, and we see it play out daily. From tribes to cliques, humans stay close to those they consider safe. This learned behavior has historically helped people survive, since those who lacked a collective frequently did not last long. When these classifications are made and one tries to recruit another to be a volunteer, or join a registry to be a potential match, challenges arise if the individual requesting these actions is designated as an outsider.

Cialdini and Goldstein offer ways to navigate such scenarios. To fully understand their techniques, one must first understand the three fundamental human motivators. The first is goal accuracy, the desire to achieve objectives and respond appropriately to situations. Thereafter is goal-oriented affiliation, which explains the need to form and maintain social bonds. Finally, positive self-concept, describes the yearning to develop and preserve favorable traits in oneself. These forces culminate not only in how people find their place within a group, but also how they build connections with others. Whether in personal relationships, professional settings, or volunteer initiatives, understanding what drives people to connect can help leaders create welcoming environments where newcomers feel comfortable and valued. When striving to increase onboarding and reduce turnover, those facilitating engagement must focus on common ground and shared passion or purpose, allowing people to overcome the perceived barrier of being an outsider.

Practical communication and engagement strategies help create an inclusive atmosphere where people feel motivated to get involved and stay committed. One can promote talent acquisition using the Door-in-the-Face technique, which begins with a preposterous request and follows with

a comparatively minor inquiry. Individuals are more likely to comply with the second plea due to the principle of reciprocity. Whereas if one aims for retention, the Foot-in-the-Door routine proves effective by securing a small initial commitment and then requesting a more sizable one. These techniques leverage the principle of consistency to drive recruitment efforts and build loyalty. Sales professionals frequently use these formulas to achieve their objective and overcome social barriers, especially when others perceive them as different. Furthermore, when individuals present the opportunity to join a collective, personal motivations and social dynamics often influence their decision.

Persuasive popularity often plays a role in engagement; when a cause gains traction or a trend goes viral, people are more likely to follow it. This psychological tendency, known as the bandwagon effect, plays a crucial role in shaping behavior and decision-making. As noted earlier in Social Identity Theory and the three human motivators, most people yearn to belong. Whether they seek acceptance within a collective circle or aim to build individual relationships, they value being included. To maintain that inclusion, they may begin to align their choices and opinions to reflect that of another or the group consensus. Thus, when pitching an idea, such as volunteering or enrolling onto a cumulative list of potential donors, success becomes more probable when a peer or group member already participates. Although, it is important to highlight each individual's ability to refrain in these situations. Engagement may falter if one signs up purely because their friends or those in their social circle did. Nevertheless, social support is imperative for attracting and retaining volunteers and donors, as well as sustaining a committed workforce.

When researchers surveyed 569 blood donors in Sarawak, Malaysia, they found that all participants held a positive intent to donate. Influential components for donation included subjective norms, pre-conceived beliefs of donation, self-efficacy, and education level. Roadblocks that generated denial were composed of a lack of peer support and limited access to coherent, easily comprehensible content (Ting et al., 2025). Increasing education on the donation process can help bypass certain entry barriers including – but not limited to – religious beliefs, cultural expectations, and skepticism surrounding medical institutions. Outreach efforts should prioritize addressing his-

torical and societal concerns so that communities understand their struggles have not been overlooked. Organizations should provide representation so potential participants feel welcomed when they see people they identify with in those positions. Moreover, when institutions ensure equitable access to healthcare, they foster trust in medical institutions and reinforce a sense of unity. Establishing this trust is essential, as it directly influences how potential donors and volunteers perceive outreach efforts.

If communication occurs too close to the time of donation or the event, people are likely to regard the contact as a marketing ploy. However, if the organization initiates contact immediately after enrollment, the appointment, or the occasion, recipients tend to respond in a positive manner. Subsequently, when one understands the impact of their contribution, they feel empowered and eagerly await the opportunity to donate their time or biological material again (Shehu et al., 2023). Correspondingly, organizations must build a strong framework for donors and volunteers to interact with. As discussed earlier, when this does not occur, volunteers often feel unprepared which breeds ill will towards the organization, the cause, or both. To address this challenge, many organizations leverage social media as a powerful tool for conveying information, conducting outreach, and fostering relationships.

Online platforms allow organizations and causes to broaden their influence. When used effectively, it is not difficult to grow a following and improve both recruitment and retention. Nevertheless, organizations must understand the types of opportunities that naturally attract different personalities (Hayoung Lim, Bouchacourt, Brown-Devlin, 2020). An individual who values socialization will gravitate towards contents that portrays social situations and high engagement (e.g., likes, comments, and interaction). By posting material in accordance with these preferences, organizations can capture their attention and increase the likelihood of participation, whether as volunteer or potential donors. In addition, promoting a range of events can help those, who may be more introverted, to have the impression that they have opportunities within the organization or cause as well. Furthermore, circulating both emotional and evidence-based content appeals to sentimental and logical audiences, expanding outreach and resulting in a diverse congregation. By

enhancing connectivity and engagement, social media can play a vital role in achieving organizational objectives and promoting global collaboration.

# Chapter 4

## The Significance

### 4.1 From a Global Perspective

A non-profit organization depends on the goodwill of others to make a difference. When volunteers do not engage, people are hesitant to join a registry, or those already registered refuse to say “yes” to a match, they significantly reduce the group’s ability to create meaningful change. Without active participation, the purpose of an operation is essentially nullified if there is no one to propel the objective forward. Eventually, this results in the organization’s closure and the loss of potential good it could have accomplished. Despite the severity of this outcome, it provides insight into the elements that curate disengagement. Comprehending the complications and boundaries offers insight into the causes behind declining donor and volunteer acquisition rates and workplace sustainability. Once people recognize these issues, strategies can be introduced and propagated to boost involvement and advance the organization’s mission.

Generally, people want to help if they have the capability and receive the opportunity. Volunteers and registered donors know they make a difference by sustaining support for global causes like helping to find – or becoming – a potential match for someone with blood cancer or a blood disorder. With the help of volunteers and donors, NMDP is notably more efficient than with their employees alone. As a result, the organization can have a pervasive impact and direct funding toward helping those in critical condition in lieu of spending it on continuous outreach efforts. Thus, this shift creates more opportunities to assist patients and save additional lives in the process.

### 4.2 From a Personal Perspective

I do not currently have children, but if I did, I know I would want them to have access to a match. At tabling events, I have met parents who realized too late that their children – as old as two and three – had a blood cancer or blood disease. Subsequently, by the time the doctors

identified the illness, these children did not have a match. Even ten years later, it still haunts those parents. I imagine what it would feel like to grow a child, meet them, fall in love with them, and then lose them far too soon. Hearing that kind of news would absolutely, and positively, break me. I know I would always question whether I could have done more. I cannot count the number of hours I have poured into the NMDP Chapter at CSU. But, when I discovered that someone I registered was identified as someone else's match, those hours ceased to matter. The match was with an older gentleman, and it made me think about how someone else's child was finally going to get the help they needed. I thought about how, if I ever have kids, I would want them to have a match too – along with the medical care and resources to be there when they need it most.

I volunteer for NMDP because I know I am making a difference. I may never meet the individuals I help by enrolling their matches onto the registry – and that is okay. What matters to me is knowing that I played a role in giving someone a second chance. I will likely never know the full extent of the matches I have made possible, or the lives those matches might save. Nonetheless, with over 2,400 individuals added to the registry through the CSU Chapter, I know that I have propagated real potential for good. Consequently, that knowledge fulfills me to an extent, that is enough. Moreover, writing this thesis has given me the space to reflect not only on what NMDP has accomplished, but also on the areas where we can still improve. It has helped me identify shortcomings and opportunities for growth, both within my own chapter and across the organization. It does not take a large change to spark an evolution, and if small improvements can increase donor and volunteer engagement and lead to more lives being saved, then the effort is absolutely worth it.

# Chapter 5

## Conclusion

The constraints that donors and volunteers face within non-profit organizations are complex, but not insurmountable. When organizations understand the barriers that deter participation, these organizations can implement effective strategies to increase involvement. The success the NMDP Chapter at CSU has achieved – enrolling over 2,400 individuals onto the registry in less than three years – demonstrates that change is possible. With dedication, collaboration, and consistent outreach efforts, people can be reached. Yet, the chapter at Colorado State University is merely a sector of NMDP. The NMDP organization possesses a far broader reach on the global stage. With a presence in over 80 countries, NMDP has the capability to enact global change. This is advantageous to millions of patients who are waiting for their match to be identified. Engagement, as a potential donor on the registry or as a volunteer, is imperative to making these pairings possible.

If the opportunity arises to resume this research, I would continue to explore the barriers to volunteer, along with donor recruitment and retention – particularly in regards to religious, cultural, and psychological factors. One immediate improvement would be to investigate the religious and cultural perspectives associated with blood and stem cell donation. When recruiting donors and volunteers for NMDP, having this knowledge readily available in the form of a flyer would be greatly beneficial. For online registration, a link to this information should be provided as well. Currently, the NMDP organization struggles to register certain individuals who face these restrictions, but providing informational material could resolve this problem. Additionally, offering informational flyers in languages other than English (e.g., Spanish, Chinese, Hindi, Arabic, etc.) would be highly beneficial to those who do not speak English as a first language. Breaking down these language barriers could increase interaction within the organization and help reduce historic mistrust. To engage more effectively with diverse communities, we must meet people where they are and create a welcoming first impression. Furthermore, analyzing and addressing psychological challenges such as medical phobias (e.g., fear of needles, blood, hospitals, etc.) would

greatly mitigate one of the largest challenges NMDP faces. Identifying these obstacles provides the groundwork for solutions which can create relevant and long-term improvements.

Recognizing the limitations and applying the solutions outlined in the thesis above play a vital role in driving sustainable non-profit efforts. Organizations can significantly improve onboarding and reduce turnover by leveraging human psychology, practicing mindful communication, and implementing structured programs. In addition, when non-profits address the broader issue of medical mistrust, particularly in culturally diverse communities, they must provide purposeful and comprehensible education to combat historical skepticism. Establishing a personal rapport with potential donors and volunteers is key to ensuring long-term commitment to the organization and its mission. Furthermore, conducting outreach through media platforms helps expand the reach one has and encourages participation, which aides in retaining overall engagement.

Ultimately, success in non-profit work depends not only on statistics, but also on the lives it transforms. Every individual who joins the registry and every volunteer who contributes their time brings hope to patients still searching for a match. The work being done at NMDP Chapter at CSU and campus chapters akin to it, exemplifies how passionate people can drive meaningful change within their communities and beyond. Although this effort must evolve as the world changes, the insights gained from research presented in this thesis highlights the impact one person can make. Donating one's time to an organization is not easy. Whether someone volunteers or registers as a donor, they need proper information and training to make an impact. However, the potential to change a life far outweighs the time it requires. By encouraging a unified, well-supported, and motivated community, non-profits can ensure their impact remains consistent and continue saving lives for years to come.

# Annotated Bibliography

Cialdini, R. B., & Goldstein, N. J. (2004). Social influence: Compliance and conformity. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 55(1), 591–621. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.55.090902.142015>.

Within this review, Cialdini and Goldstein delve into research published between 1997 and 2002 to investigate issues of compliance and conformity within social spheres. They explore each topic through the lens of three fundamental human motivators: goal accuracy, the desire to achieve one’s goal and respond appropriately to situations; goal-oriented affiliation, explaining the need to create and maintain social relationships with others; and positive self-concept which explores the yearning to enhance and maintain positive traits in oneself. The review observes numerous compliance techniques, including the sales strategies of door-in-face and foot-in door. Conformity aligns with the three human motivators, as demonstrated through a wide range of research studies and conclusions. This source shines light on key issues prevalent in recruitment and addresses essential questions such as, “How do we get more attention?” and “How do we increase the rate that donors would say yes to joining?”

De Clerck, T., Willem, A., Aelterman, N., & Haerens, L. (2019). Volunteers managing volunteers: The role of volunteer board members’ motivating and demotivating style in relation to volunteers’ motives to stay volunteer. *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 32(6), 1271–1284. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11266-019-00177-6>.

This study examines the relationship between volunteer board members’ motivation styles and the factors that influence to continue serving nonprofits and voluntary sports clubs. By utilizing the Self-Determination Theory, the authors evaluate those who are intrinsically motivated, extrinsically motivated, and a-motivated. When they compared these motivation styles to how board members motivate, or demotivate, it became

clear that volunteers thrive in environments with autonomous and supportive structure in place that supports group-task unity. The research and figures within this text are pertinent to my work due as NMDP is a nonprofit and, as a volunteer, I regularly interact with volunteer board members. Additionally, board members must be studied as they typically appear at the events along with the volunteers. In turn, their attitudes play a key role in shaping the overall experience, and studying them helps to ensure that all realms of donor recruitment are appropriately be addressed in a comprehensive strategy.

Hudson, S. K. (2021). Improving volunteer engagement in nonprofit healthcare organizations. *Scientific Research Publishing*. <https://www.scirp.org/journal/paperinformation?paperid=109580>.

This journal discusses methods to enhance volunteer participation and retention within nonprofit healthcare organizations by observing previous strategies, research, and the validity of it. Within the analysis, researchers surveyed five healthcare leaders from a nonprofit organization in the Southwestern United States to identify their strengths and downfalls in volunteer engagement and recruitment. Hudson compiles this information and examines the research methods used by via observing the design, data collection, sampling, population, reliability to conclude the plausibility of the findings. This journal supports my thesis by directly addressing donor recruitment through the conscription and retention of volunteers. Volunteers play a crucial role in helping nonprofits function; without which, events cannot occur, resulting in little to no action being done. In turn, the findings concluded by Hudson will bolster NMDP Chapter at CSU and the broader NMDP organization by improving how we enlist potential donors, and therefore, generate matches faster.

Kumar, A., Kumari, S., Saroj, U., Verma, A., Kiran, K. A., Prasad, M. K., Sinha, R., & Sinha, M. B. K. (2023). Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on blood donation patterns: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Cureus*, August 12. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10495075/>.

The following authors review the impact COVID-19, the global pandemic, had on whole blood donation patterns and offers valuable insight into the medical field and public perception following the crisis. The authors provide a statistical analysis across 52 countries, presenting a robust report not only of the American experience, but also of global trends. After identifying 9,130 studies, the authors narrowed it down to 15 studies to incorporate into their analysis. They conducted this research in hopes to increase blood donations to maintain the global blood supply. To increase donor enrollment and engagement on the NMDP registry, I will utilize the following statistic: “There was an overall decrease in blood donation of 25%, with some regions showing a decrease of as much as 71%. However, some regions were able to experience a 2-10% increase in blood donation after taking stringent and early measures to prevent such decreases.” This quote depicts the disparity seen in blood-related donations, which a driving factor in understanding the declining trend among donors.

Lim, H. S., Bouchacourt, F., & Brown-Devlin, N. (2020). Nonprofit organization advertising on social media: The role of personality, advertising appeals, and bandwagon effects. *Journal of Consumer Behavior*, 20(4), 849–861. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.1898>.

The following journal by Hayoung, Bouchacourt, and Brown-Devlin investigate how personality influence social media advertising for non-profit organizations. Their publication explores the relationship between personality and prosocial behavior by comparing results from the HEXACO-PI personality test – which adds a sixth testing factor, Honesty/Humility – to the previous test of the Big Five. Additionally, they explore the effectiveness of appealing to an audience using emotional or rational methods as

well as the impact of social media metrics, such as likes, comments, and shares. Their goal is to determine how personality traits affect advertising outcomes. This information is prudent to my thesis as it emphasizes the care required when marketing to an individual. Although the research is conducted with social media in mind, the conclusions apply to real-world contexts as well, offering insight into which personality traits serve as predispositions to support nonprofits and help other people. This information can be utilized online and in person to improve marketing techniques, thus increasing recruitment and retention of donor and volunteers alike. Therefore, this is especially relevant to NMDP, which depends on targeted outreach to connect with individuals who are likely to engage with the cause and say “yes” to joining the registry.

Prince, W., & Piatak, J. (2022). By the volunteer, for the volunteer: Volunteer perspectives of management across levels of satisfaction. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 52(5), 1191–1209. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08997640221127974>.

William and Piatak’s research article explore the issues associated with minority representation the medical donation process. They identify several barriers to entry, including racism, discrimination, mistrust in medical institutions, language barriers, and citizen requirements. Furthermore, many individuals prefer to donate to family members instead of strangers. To address these concerns, the authors propose solutions that shift away from a one-size-fits-all approach that donation programs typically adopt. They explained that tailoring approaches would be beneficial to meet community needs and, to address concerns, policies should be reconstructed to reflect an understanding of them. Additionally, they advocate for more direct engagement with the communities, allowing individuals who place high value on familial relationships to understand that the donation process is not limited to anonymous recipients. These findings allow the Colorado State Chapter of NMDP to reevaluate how we are marketing on and off

campus, which could yield an increase in representation on the registry, and therefore, create more matches for those that are ethnically diverse.

Shehu, E., Veseli, B., Clement, M., & Winterich, K. P. (2023). Improving blood donor retention and donor relationships with past donation use appeals. *Journal of Service Research, 27*(3), 346–363. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10946705231202244>.

Within this study, the following authors observe the role of communication in donor relationships, as all facets of the medical field struggle to retain donors. Over the years, traditional strategies such as thank-you messages and future uses for one's donation have become less effective. Researchers have found out that timing plays a big role in whether someone will donate. If the contact occurs too close to the next appointment, individuals likely view the contact as a marketing ploy. However, if the contact is directly after their donation, they will receive it in a positive manner. Subsequently, providing information on how one's past donation was used makes the process feel real. People often say that knowledge is power, and if someone knows the good their contribution is creating, they are likely to continue their action. Consequently, how an individual receives communication from the lab or organization in charge is of the donation is of the utmost importance to ensure retention and propagate that relationship. This knowledge is crucial to understanding how to interact with individuals both on and off the registry and can shed light on how to make someone more comfortable with the idea of donating.

Switzer, G. E., Bruce, J. G., Myaskovsky, L., Meyer, D., DiMartini, A., Confer, D. L., ... & Simmons, R. G. (2013). Race and ethnicity in decisions about unrelated hematopoietic stem cell donation. *Blood, 121*(8), 1469–1476. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3578960/>.

Switzer's publishing explores reasons behind the discrepancies prevalent in finding matched donors for racial and ethnic minorities in unrelated hematopoietic stem cell (HSC) donors. Using the National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP), he conducts a study regarding cultural, psychological, and donation-related factors that may affect a minority's decision to donate. He believed religious or cultural beliefs and objections, as well as a mistrust in how organizations use one's information or donation, contributed to this issue, and Switzer's article supports that hypothesis. This supports my thesis by allowing us to improve our marketing towards racial and ethnic minorities at events and during volunteer trainings. Additionally, I include findings from this research in the introductory flyer I created, which has the potential to alleviate concerns in the moment and increase the odds of someone joining the registry.

Ting, C. Y., Lee, Y. F., Lim, C. J., Ting, R. S. K., MD Zahrin, M. M., Ahmad, A. S., Wong, J. S. Y., Arip, M., Zakaria, Z., Aduce, A. Z., Tnay, J. K. S., & Wong, Y. S. B. (2021). Factors associated with intention to donate hematopoietic stem cells among blood donors. *Transfusion Medicine and Hemotherapy*. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34177425/>.

The following article examines the factors associated with the intent to donate hematopoietic stem cells (HSC). Researchers surveyed 569 blood donors in Sarawak, Malaysia, and found that the majority had a positive intent to donate, with influential components being subjective norms, one's attitude toward donation, self-efficacy, and their education level. This information concludes that for more individuals to donate, they must have receive stronger social support and clearer, more accessible information. This research supports my thesis by identifying areas that need improvement to increase donors recruitment. Furthermore, it provides insight into prudent information that I should communicate in the introductory flyer, my creative component.

Vearrier, L. (2020). Enlightened self-interest in altruism (ESIA). *Springer Nature*.  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7224037/>.

Observing altruism in the medical field and the widespread decline of altruistic movement due to burnout in students and physicians. Vearrier utilizes the framework of Enlightened Self-Interest in Altruism (ESIA), which balances both egoism and altruism – components she clarifies are both necessary for sustaining a long career in medicine. However, she reports that burnout rates exceed 50% within the workplace, which leads to lower quality of care, increased medical errors, and decreased patient satisfaction. In an industry that relies on the goodwill of others to make a difference, this may cause donors or volunteers from helping an organization or choosing to donate. This article offers insight into the decline in donor and volunteer recruitment rates, and by understanding the problem, we can begin to work towards a solution.

Wittock, N., Monforte, P., & Hustinx, L. (2021). “Missing minorities” in blood donation: Rethinking blood procurement in Europe as a citizenship regime. *JSTOR*. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27127831>.

Wittock, Monforte and Hustinx argue that systemic issues – not a lack of willingness, as some might suggest – cause the under-representation in medical donations. They delve into institutional concerns and identify obstacles such as cultural differences, policies and distrust of the medical field. People often ask why minorities don’t donate, but what if that’s the wrong question? By exploring how minorities donate, we may find a clearer solution. The two principal requirements of donation are as follows; To begin, donation follows the gifting logic – the idea that people donate because they are altruistic, and that donation is a voluntary act. Second, donation involves safety logic, which governs the regulations that protect people; in other words, it includes everything that could prevent someone from donating. The issue with gifting logic, lies in the fact that not all cultures share these ideals, and the concern with safety logic

is that deferral policies often exclude minorities due to travel history or other barriers. We must understand the hurdles that prevent individuals from joining the registry in order to change them. If we can find a way to do so while still maintaining transfusion safety, that would be imperative for increasing representation. As a chapter, we may not have the power to change existing regulations, but by comprehending the pitfalls of the current system can allow discussions to occur, and ultimately, alterations to be made.