



Neighboring 2009 Evaluation Report

OBJECTIVES

As stated in the mid-term report, the goal of the Points of Light Institute and HandsOn Network 2009 program year was to extend and deepen the impact of Neighboring on communities across the country and to extensively evaluate Neighboring communities to identify family strengthening outcomes achieved and essential activities that contribute to success and sustainability of initiatives.

This final program report summarizes the findings from the program monitoring and performance measurement activities completed supporting the stated objectives and is organized into Parts A-C.

A. Sub-granting-MDS	Provide 3-5 Model Demonstration Sub-grants where grantees will engage marginalized residents and families as volunteers in neighborhood and community activities including: community needs assessment, program and activity planning, service provision and leadership development.
B. Best practice dissemination	National Conference on Volunteering and Service: We will host multiple Neighboring related events at conference where participants will learn about the value, importance, and strategies of Neighboring as a way to bring about community change.
	Webinars: We will collect and disseminate information on best practices through 3 national webinars through the duration of the grant term.
C. Technical assistance	We will deploy members of Neighboring Task Force to serve as Technical Assistance support to the model demonstration sites as well as to other Network Affiliates who wish to implement or expand Neighboring strategies.

Since the commencement of the 2009 program period, the Model Demonstration Site (MDS) sub-grantees have carried out activities unique to their funding stream. MDS sub-grantees developed and implemented Neighboring programs based on community assessments, providing a picture of Neighboring's present and future. Dissemination of best practices has been completed through workshop offerings and networking receptions at the National Conference on Volunteering and Service as well as webinars offered to HandsOn Network affiliate organizations by Points of Light Institute and HandsOn Network staff. Finally, technical assistance has been provided by Neighboring Task Force members to model demonstration sites as well as other HON Affiliates who are implementing Neighboring activities.



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Due to the different purposes of the objectives listed above this report intentionally discusses the activities and results, progress on reach, engagement and action performance measures, achievement of expected outcomes and discussion of obstacles/challenges for each independently.

In addition to the findings presented here, MDS stakeholders, along with participants in technical assistance and best practices activities, were invited to complete constituent-specific surveys to offer a perspective of how Neighboring and community building impact individuals, families, and communities. An addendum featuring results from constituent surveys is expected to be released at the end of March (See Appendix I).

Part A. SUBGRANTING- MODEL DEMONSTRATION SITES

ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

Three Model Demonstration Sites (MDS), new to the Neighboring grant-making program and committed to producing resident-owned community building activities to improve family economic stability and create community change, are:

- Greater DC Cares (Washington, DC)
- HandsOn Central California (Fresno, CA)
- Volunteer Mobile (Mobile, AL)

Greater DC Cares engages residents to “make improvements next door, around the corner, and just down the block.” Some of the many programs and services led by the sub-grantee include:

- Facilitating community meetings to glean resident talents, skills, concerns, and ideas while offering a venue to commune with each other
- Providing logistical support to local volunteers who have undertaken a poetry group with children and teens, a family reading circle, and a community garden
- Coordinating a monthly children’s outing with the Sierra Club’s Inner City Outings program to visit wild areas in the Washington Area, while their parents have the opportunity to learn about long term financial planning through the Capitol Financial Literacy Project, and other local nonprofits
- Assisting a growing partnership between volunteers and the Howard Business School to prepare taxes for low income residents and small businesses

In Fresno, CA, **HandsOn Central California** oversaw surveyor trainings in appreciative inquiry to build the capacity of community residents to collect data during door-to-door asset mapping, clean-up projects fueled by resident and traditional volunteers, and holiday parties for residents and with resident support.



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From meetings hosted by **Volunteer Mobile** to discuss a neighborhood agenda grew numerous resident-identified solutions in which Volunteer Mobile committed support and assistance. Some of these activities include:

- Creating and maintaining a resident volunteer-powered community garden
- Providing resources and connections for residents to create community clean-ups
- Empowering fifth graders to create disaster kits with and for their families
- Hosting a parent day to provide resources and information

All in all, over 3,500 individuals participated in events led by sub-grantees, as Table 1 shows. Nearly 730 people touched by these programs are volunteers, and of these volunteers one third are residents of the community being served by the program (247).

Table 1. Participation rates by stakeholder type

	Greater DC Cares	HandsOn Central California	Volunteer Mobile	Total
Resident volunteer from community being served	158	39	31	228
Resident volunteer leader from community being served	13	4	2	19
Traditional volunteer from outside community being served	34	301	144	479
Traditional volunteer leader from outside community being served	2	0	1	3
All volunteer types sub-total	207	344	178	729
Funder	17	3	1	21
Solely beneficiary	72	2,100	650	2,822
Other	17	0	0	17
Total	313	2,447	829	3,589

REACH PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- Sub-Grants to Model Demonstration Sites: Provide sub-grants to three organizations (\$20,000.00-\$25,000.00) to conduct Neighboring projects appropriate for identified communities, with an emphasis on economic recovery and community change (such as Earned Income Tax Credit, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, fiscal literacy, job readiness, etc.);
- Offer 30 Neighboring focused opportunities (projects, trainings, special events, meetings, etc.) that are led/managed through sub-grantees and relate to the determined area of concern for community (with special emphasis on economic recovery);



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PROGRESS ON REACH PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

Sub-granting

As noted in **Activities and Results** section above, sub-granting occurred to Greater DC Cares, HandsOn Central California, and Volunteer Mobile. Each MDS addresses different facets of economic recovery and community change utilizing a community empowerment approach in which assets are employed to address identified community needs. The next section describes the activities and service opportunities implemented by the sub-grantees and key results achieved that demonstrate progress towards reach performance measures. .

Sub-grantee orientation: On July 28th and 29th, MDS grantees were invited to Washington DC for 2 full days of orientation to learn about Neighboring history and essential strategies, training curriculum in Grassroots Leadership and volunteer leader training, asset mapping and community needs assessment, and asset based community development. Orientation evaluations were administered to assess overall satisfaction with orientation experience and each session that was offered during the 2 day orientation. Attendees were asked to respond to statements on a scale of 1-5 where 1= unsatisfactory and 5= outstanding. Findings from the satisfaction and session surveys indicated that the orientation was successful but there were areas for improvement in future orientations. While a number of trainings were presented to the participants, Asset mapping and Needs Assessment rated the most satisfactory whereas sessions focused on training curriculum were rated as least satisfactory.

Opportunities

MDS oversaw the implementation of 63 Neighboring-focused activities aligned with the goals of the Neighboring initiative. Table 2 categorizes opportunities by type.



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Table 2. Type and frequency of opportunities offered by MDS

Types of Opportunities	Number of opportunities	MDS involved in type of opportunity	Goals		
			Improve economic stability of program participants and community	Provide access to needed services and supports	Build caring and nurturing social networks that promote community change
Community involvement projects	37	Greater DC Cares	X	X	X
		HandsOn Central CA			
		Volunteer Mobile			
Community meetings	10	Greater DC Cares		X	X
		Volunteer Mobile			
Financial literacy workshops	2	Greater DC Cares	X	X	
		Volunteer Mobile			
Nonprofit council meetings	1	Greater DC Cares		X	X
Orientations and training	24	Greater DC Cares		X	X
		HandsOn Central CA			
		Volunteer Mobile			

Community improvement projects were the most frequently occurring activity and are a strong manifestation of neighbor to neighbor helping. All in all, MDS report that community residents capably took ownership of these projects and are the self appointed successors to ensure the projects' livelihood into the future. By supporting resident action in hands on service, MDS cited that their role was not to direct or lead activities, but to support resident efforts: "They identified a project, and asked for assistance. We helped them to execute it", and "This has guided us toward how empowering volunteers and providing assistance, rather than dictating the project, can create self sustaining projects which also empower community members." To Neighbor successfully, one MDS raised the need to shift resident thinking from recipients of service to providers of service. In addition, the pragmatic aspects of Neighboring also came to the fore: it is important to provide child care, translators, and food and to also keep in mind timing and length of projects to meet the varied and often basic needs of under-resourced volunteers and community residents.



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Orientations and trainings, as Table 2 shows, were held regularly throughout the grant period. It is important to note that Greater DC Cares provided an abundance of new volunteer orientations and account for the majority of the total MDS orientations activities. In fact, this initiative has led to a systems change at the agency: new volunteer orientations will now be held at partner agencies such as senior and community centers and with locally-based groups. Grouped into this opportunity category are mentor orientations DC Cares also conducts in which residents from the neighborhood were matched with mentoring organizations at a meet and greet immediately following orientation. These newly minted resident mentors are then placed in neighborhood schools.

Community meetings, in many ways, are the lifeblood of all other activities MDS support. As one MDS reports, "Many of our programs have come from these [meetings]...they are the means by which we discover the assets in the community, focusing them toward the needs of that community, and then develop empowerment for community members who are now in charge of community's programs." Productive on many levels, these meetings helped to build trust, spark new relationships and connections, create an understanding of assets and needs, and generate ideas for solutions.

ENGAGEMENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- 750 community residents participate in Neighboring opportunities. Participation is defined as attending a Neighboring opportunity facilitated by the sub-grantee or another program participant. Participation will be measured by program attendance records
- Community needs assessment and asset maps completed for 3 neighborhoods within 3 months from start date.

PROGRESS ON ENGAGEMENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

Participants

Table 1 in Activities and Results details the participation outputs in which MDS report engaging 247 resident volunteers, 452 traditional volunteers, and about 2,800 beneficiaries in Neighboring opportunities. Given the timing of this assessment only clears the six month mark in the program year for POLI MDS grantees and includes the start up period which typically includes some delays in program implementation, it is a reasonable conjecture that MDS will achieve or come in slightly under the expected target of 750 resident participants. While MDS may not full meet the performance target for resident volunteer engagement, they have demonstrated strong engagement by touching the lives of over 3,500 individuals.

Another source of participation data, in addition to the figures above from the reporting tool, is the activity and participants roster POLI provided to MDS to dynamically track participation and activities throughout the program year. It is important to note that roster data and report data on participation do not match - unfortunately HandsOn California did not submit a roster and other grantees' data sets appear incomplete- which is a limitation we acknowledge and accept for the purposes of this supplementary analysis.



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Participants—a closer examination

- Repeat participation is an important indicator of quality and potentially progressive engagement.
- For those participants tracked by sub-grantees, over a quarter participate in more than one activity (n=191).

In addition, participation by site was compared to Census statistics (ZIP codes of service areas; multiple ZIP codes averaged) to ascertain how closely attendees reflect the community. Results in Table 3 indicate that DC tends to engage a more homogeneous and younger group of people than the community composition; Mobile successfully reached the African American community, yet participants are more likely to be female and older than the population.



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Table 3. Comparison of Neighboring participants to community

AVERAGE FOR:	Greater DC Cares		HandsOn Central California Volunteer Mobile			
	Particip ants	Service Area	Particip ants	Service Area	Particip ants	Service Area
Ethnicity	n=119	n=195,393		n=22,791	n=71	n=106,462
African American	24.8	52.2	NA	4.2	64.6	56.1
Caucasian/White	57.5	18.3	NA	16.9	32.9	39.9
American Indian and Alaska Native	0	0.4	NA	1.9	0	0.2
Asian	8.4	2.7	NA	10.1	0	1.3
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0	0.1	NA	0.1	0	0
Latino/Hispanic	8.4	15	NA	39.3	0	1.3
Other race (incl two or more)	2.5	0.1	NA	27.6	2.5	1.3
Gender	n=197	n=166,327		n=13,844	n=79	n=104,885
Male	30.5	49.5	NA	51.8	38	46.8
Female	69.5	50.5	NA	48.2	62	53.2
Age	n=102	n=139,285		n=18,712	n=79	n=80,799
24 and younger	29.4	32	NA	56	32.4	33.3
25 to 34	51	20.5	NA	14.8	15.5	13.8
35 to 44	10.8	16.4	NA	12.6	12.7	15
45 to 54	6.9	12.7	NA	8.3	18.3	12.8
55 to 64	2	7.7	NA	3.9	15.5	8
65 and older	0	10.8	NA	4.4	5.6	17.1

Community Assessments

Summaries of community assessments are contained in Appendix II. MDS utilized these tools to capture resident voice and inform the strategic direction of Neighboring opportunities. Table 4 depicts the assets and needs that emerged from the sub-grantee led community assessment with residents, along with examples of Neighboring opportunities that grew out of the pairing of assets and needs.



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Table 4. Assets and needs identified through community assessment process

	Assets	Needs	Examples
Greater DC Cares	Area businesses Area nonprofits Skilled residents	Crime (CC) Health & addiction (CC) Job training (ER)	Youth basketball league Yoga classes Leadership trainings
HandsOn Central California	Partners Residents	Beautification (CC) Financial literacy (ER) Safety (CC)	Community cleanups Schoolyard beautification
Volunteer Mobile	Area nonprofits Government agencies Culture Social networks	Accessibility to services (CC) Beautification (CC) Healthy lifestyles (CC) Parenting (CC) Tax assistance (ER)	Resource guide published Community cleanups Community garden Parenting class VISTA site launched 1/10

Common assets to the MDS are, naturally, the talent of residents as well as the expertise of area institutions. General definitions of Community Change (CC) and Economic Recovery (ER) encompass the needs identified across all MDS, and the program examples are illustrative of how MDS align services to needs.

In summary, the exercise undertaken by MDS to map Neighboring activities to community voiced needs appears generally successful. Volunteer Mobile appears to be most successful in this exercise as evidenced by the clear link to activities offered and needs identified (e.g. identified need of accessibility to services---responding by resource guide publication). It should be noted that many of the needs identified, such as crime and health require systemic change and within the grant period, MDS appear to be making an earnest effort to contribute.

ACTION PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Sub-grantees, community partners and residents design, implement and execute Neighboring opportunities in each of the 3 communities identified
- 100% of Neighboring opportunities offered are aligned with identified needs in and/or assets available in community
- Neighboring initiatives include progressive engagement of local residents where progressive is defined as moving from receivers of service, to volunteer, to volunteer leader
- Data to address this measure will be collected through survey of program participants and attendance records
- Neighboring opportunities are progressively designed and led by local residents



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PROGRESS ON ACTION PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

Design, implementation and execution

To design, implement, and execute these programs and services, MDS, along with residents, collaborated with area agencies and groups. As Table 5 illustrates, some partnerships are new, expanding the reach of sub-grantees; some are established and used in a new way or simply more successfully, deepening the footprint of sub-grantees in these neighborhoods.

Table 5. Partnership development

	New	Established, used differently	Established	<i>Total</i>
Greater DC Cares	5	2	1	8
HandsOn Central California	9	3	2	14
Volunteer Mobile	8	6	7	21
<i>Total</i>	22	11	10	43

The host of nonprofits, government agencies, faith-based organizations, educational institutions, collaborative, businesses, and community and resident groups participating in a Neighboring partnership is provided below in Table 6.



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Table 6. Partnerships by grantee

Greater DC Cares	HandsOn Central California	Volunteer Mobile
Books for America	AmeriCorps Safe and Proud Neighborhood	Florence Howard Elementary School
Bruce Monroe Elementary School	Building Healthy Communities Collaborative	Franklin Primary Healthcare
Community of Hope	California State University Fresno	Housing First
Ecology DC	Central Fresno Weed and Seed	IRS
GADGET Center Howard Univ.	City of Fresno Downtown Revitalization, Code Enforcement, Public Works, Arborist, Mayor and her communication team	Keep Mobile Beautiful
Park View Recreation Center	Every Neighborhood Partnership	Lowe's
Park View United Neighborhood Coalition	Fresno Institute for Urban Leadership	MLK Redevelopment Corporation
Sierra Club	FUND	Mobile Association for the Blind
	Lowell Elementary School	Mobile Historic Development Commission
	Lowell Neighborhood Association	Mt. Gilead Missionary Baptist Church
	Lowell Neighborhood Resource Center	Police Department
	Tree Fresno	Springhill Recreation Center Advisory Council
	Union de Familia	United Way of Southwest Alabama

Additionally, a number of the Neighboring opportunities MDS reported are purely resident led. Beyond providing support, it is the residents, not the MDS, who are responsible for the design, implementation, and execution of these projects. This transfer of ownership is central to grow and sustain Neighboring, given that MDS resources and supports are available to residents.

Need and asset alignment

For each Neighboring opportunity implemented, MDS explained how it aligned with needs and assets in the community. MDS provided rationale for direct alignment for 100 percent of the opportunities. Some examples are in **Table 7**.



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Table 7. Needs and asset alignment with opportunities offered

	Opportunity	Need	Asset
Greater DC Cares	Financial literacy workshops	Economic concerns	Two skilled resident volunteers manage entire program
	Community improvement projects	Crime alleviation through beautification of hard hit areas	Residents serve as volunteers, along with traditional volunteers
HandsOn Central California	Beautification projects	Uncared for public spaces	Residents are (small) part of volunteer force
Volunteer Mobile	Community garden	Limited access to homegrown foods	Leadership by residents has increased over time

Progressive engagement

The progressive engagement of local residents will be discussed in the addendum to this report produced in March 2010.

Progressive leadership

The findings about progressive leadership are somewhat mixed. While MDS have put into place systems to encourage the progressive involvement of residents in designing and leading Neighboring opportunities, it is not clear from reports how accessible and practical these systems are and whether the intentions of these systems will come to fruition. Some successful examples are, again, those opportunities in which MDS provide assistance at the periphery, providing the tools and resources for volunteers to take more complex and meaningful roles. And while this peripheral assistance may be seen as passive, it works when individuals have taken on or are willing to take on a leadership role already. See Table 8 for illustration of some strategies MDS are using to encourage progressive leadership in the community.



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Table 8. Progressive leadership opportunities and strategies

	Opportunity	Strategy for progressive leadership
Greater DC Cares	Financial literacy workshops	Implemented solely by neighbors
	Nonprofit council	Leadership board to be created
	Community improvement projects	Only TA offered; agencies and volunteers lead (some residents; some traditional)
HandsOn Central California	Beautification projects	Inviting residents to planning meetings
Volunteer Mobile	Community garden	Grassroots training planned for advisory council
	Community cleanups	Only TA offered; agencies and volunteers lead (some residents; some traditional)

The addendum slated for March 2010 will dive deeper into the topic of progressive leadership.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Increased knowledge, skills, and abilities that support employability
- Increased access to and/or knowledge of social and support services
- Increased participation of Neighborhood institutions

Progress toward expected outcomes, from the perspective of individuals and institutions, will be thoroughly discussed in the March 2010 addendum.

When self-rating *general* outcomes realization to-date, MDS sub-grantees, for the most part, believe they have made steady progress. Tables 9 and 10 describe self-assessments using a 10-point scale, where 1=no progress and 10=goal achieved, along with sub-grantee rationale for providing each rating.



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Table 9. Self-reported progress on outcome achievement

	Self-Rating	Rationale Provided
INCREASED KNOWLEDGE SKILLS AND ABILITIES		
Greater DC Cares	8	Tax preparation skills gained; financial skills and literacy trainings conducted; children improved reading skills; leadership trainings run
HandsOn Central California	2	Knowledge expected to change in one particular neighborhood
Volunteer Mobile	6	211 phone cards increased access to services
CHANGES IN BEHAVIORS, MOTIVATIONS AND ATTITUDES		
Greater DC Cares	8	Leadership tools provided to equip people to lead projects
HandsOn Central California	3	Stakeholders engaging more with residents
Volunteer Mobile	6	Witnessed in growing and maintaining garden
CHANGES IN MDS ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE		
Greater DC Cares	7	Changing to institutionalized neighboring
HandsOn Central California	6	Thinking differently about how to engage volunteers in place-based projects
Volunteer Mobile	6	Expanded economic segment and changing VISTA program

We utilized the strategy of MDS self-assessment to report on progress towards expected outcomes as a leading indicator of future success. Typically, in the program evaluation field it is accepted that limited outcomes may truly be achieved within only 6 months of program implementation. While this exercise may not be particularly strong for measuring the degree to which participant outcomes are achieved, we believe that the self-assessment process was a worthwhile learning experience for MDS grantees and in particular to think about how the Neighboring initiative has influenced their organizational culture and operations.

CHALLENGES/OBSTACLES

All MDS have experienced much success in achieving the goals of the program; however, MDS must continue at the same rate, if not increase it, to hit resident targets set for the grant period. When including programming under the Neighboring umbrella, it is critical that MDS co-create with residents even if it means more time invested or fewer numbers engaged (given this, it is possible that the target be renegotiated for future years). While all projects occurred in the geographical focus area, some of them may not truly qualify as Neighboring if held to a strict litmus test.



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In terms of how sub-grantees view their own goal attainment, a 10-point scale (1=no progress; 10=goal achieved) was used to self rate for each of the three program goals and is provided in Table 10. At this half-year mark, Greater DC Cares seems confident of progress towards goals; Volunteer Mobile is consistent and generally positive; HandsOn Central California, which was in the midst of drought relief at the onset of the Neighboring project, may come to realize goals in time (yet may also benefit from peer support or strategic involvement of the national office to regain momentum and focus).

Table 10. Self-reported progress towards goal attainment

	Self-Rating	Rationale Provided
IMPROVES ECONOMIC STABILITY OF PARTICIPANTS AND COMMUNITY		
Greater DC Cares	7	VITA tax prep, business round table, and technology programming are opportunities to increase economic success
HandsOn Central California	1	Only in discussion stages
Volunteer Mobile	3	VITA to begin in 2010; resource guide provided economic resources
PROVIDES ACCESS TO NEEDED SERVICES AND SUPPORTS		
Greater DC Cares	6	Volunteers work on multiple levels to achieve this goal
HandsOn Central California	3	Referrals to agencies made
Volunteer Mobile	6	Provided 211 cards to access phone assistance
BUILD CARING AND NUTURING SOCIAL NETWORKS THAT PROMOTE COMMUNITY CHANGE		
Greater DC Cares	7	Leveraging energy from other organizations and groups
HandsOn Central California	3	Initial community buildings spurred networks
Volunteer Mobile	4	Relationship building with stakeholders

Although hitting resident targets may prove challenging and success varies by site, overall MDS have created working systems to authentically engage residents in community assessments, capacity building, and volunteer activities to restructure their own community according to their own agenda. Over this six month time period, MDS have discovered how Neighboring is defined in their own community and increasingly view their role from initiator to coach, resource, and support.



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Part B. BEST PRACTICES DISSEMINATION - CONFERENCE AND WEBINARS

ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS TO DATE

Best Practice Dissemination at National Conference on Volunteering and Service

At the National Conference on Volunteering & Service in San Francisco, CA June 22nd-24th, Neighboring related workshops were elevated to a higher level. Task Force members and past Neighboring grantees hosted three workshops, one Immersion Learning Session (ILS), and a Neighboring Reception. Total attendance at Neighboring related events was over 150 participants. In addition, 350 individuals attended the ILS opening session providing them with a preliminary overview of the Neighboring concept.

We also introduced the concept of Neighboring at a morning roundtable on Poverty Alleviation as a strategy to create community investment and promote sustainability in bringing community members out of poverty.

National Webinars

We hosted 1 webinar during the program period to date and plan to host 2 additional webinar in the upcoming months. Our first webinar in October 2009, facilitated by past affiliates who hosted Neighboring- MLK projects, provided 39 participants information on how to convert their 2010 MLK day of service projects into ongoing Neighboring projects. The idea was to train participants on the impact and power of resident engagement on large days of service and the webinar was very well received. Topics for the upcoming webinars include training residents as volunteer leaders (February) and Neighboring in multicultural communities (April).

REACH PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- National Conference on Volunteering and Service: Host three conference workshops, one conference Immersion Learning Session, and one Neighboring reception
- Three National Webinars: Host three national webinars

PROGRESS ON REACH PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

The National Conference on Volunteering and Service was a significant success as Neighboring was elevated to the next level and was often used in terms to describe a way of engaging residents in service. We met our reach performance measure for the National Conference on Volunteering and Service by offering 3 workshops, 1 immersion learning session that focused on Neighboring and offered a reception and networking event. A detailed description of each offering is provided below.

Workshops:

1. What Kind of Neighbor Are You? (presented by Task Force members: Jeanette Hrovatich and Jan L Alloy)
2. The Neighboring Concept: Making a Big Impact with Distinct Populations (presented by Task Force member: Kristina Beamish and 2008 Start-Up Grantees: Sara Ballard and Lindsey Younger)



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3. Neighboring in Practice-Opening the Doors to all for Civic Action (presented by Task Force member: Gigi Rolfes and 2008 Innovation grantee: Adraine LaRoza)

Immersion Learning Session:

Neighboring was highlighted as part of an Immersion Learning Session entitled: Everybody Can Serve-Widening the Door to Volunteering. The Immersion Learning Session was attended by over 350 participants and included a 'plenary' and 4 breakout sessions with a) Laverne Webb, of Encompass, b) Peter Levine of CIRCLE (Center for Information and Learning on Civic Learning and Engagement), c) Donna Bojarksy- LA Works and California State Commission and d) John Nevitt, SES Neighboring grantee from Metro United Way of Louisville and William Traynor of Lawrence Community Works Inc. The breakout session focused on Neighboring also was co-facilitated by Metro United Way of Louisville Neighboring grantee staff member, a partner organization representative and a resident leader along with William Traynor.

Neighboring Reception:

Neighboring reception was a big hit with over 80 people in attendance and included a slideshow of Neighboring projects, talks by William Traynor and Metro United Way in Louisville about the power of authentic resident engagement, roundtable discussions on Neighboring with youth, Hispanic Americans, etc., and an announcement of the 2009 grantees.

National Webinars:

We have made 33% progress towards our national webinar reach performance measure by completion of 1 of 3 webinars. We intend to offer 2 more webinars in coming months and topics of these offerings include: training residents as volunteer leaders (February) and Neighboring in multicultural communities (April).

ENGAGEMENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- National Conference on Volunteering and Service: At least 75 individuals participate in conference workshops
- Post-workshop evaluations show 75% of participants gain new knowledge and/or learn new skills
- At least 50 individuals attend Immersion Learning session, post session evaluation show 75% of participants learn new skills
- At least 80 individuals attend reception, post-reception evaluations show 75% of participants gained new understanding of Neighboring as a strategy for engaging new communities and providing family strengthening activities
- Three National Webinars: At least 50 individuals will participate in Neighboring related webinars, and post-webinar evaluations show that 75% of participants found value in the presentation and can provide at least one way they will implement a Neighboring practice at their local volunteer center;



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PROGRESS ON ENGAGEMENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

National Conference on Volunteering and Service:

Neighboring events at the National Conference on Volunteering and Service witnessed an increased in participation. Based on sign in sheets collected during each of the Neighboring workshops and activities, the total number of participants in all sessions was 154. This far exceeds our performance measure target of exposing 75 individuals to Neighboring. In addition, we know that the Immersion Learning Session was attended by over 350 individuals, where they had the opportunity to hear from William Traynor and Metro United Way of Louisville, a Neighboring grantee, about the Neighboring concept.

Evaluation of National Conference Activities:

Pre and post workshop evaluations were collected from 40 of the total 154 attendees. Based on the information that was collected from Neighboring workshop participants, the data indicated that participants did in fact, acquire new skills and a deeper level of understanding of the Neighboring concept, principles and strategies. The average pre-test rating of either Agree or Strongly Agree was 43%, whereas the post-test average was 75%. The strongest increases were seen in response to statements "I understand Neighboring strategies for engaging low-income, underserved communities in civic action" and "I understand the core elements that make Neighboring different from other models of volunteer engagement". This supports that the workshops sufficiently provided relevant information about the Neighboring concept and how it is uniquely different from other models of volunteer engagement.

National Webinars:

We achieved 78% progress towards our national webinar engagement performance measure through engagement of 39 of the projected 50 individuals. We did not implement a follow up survey following our first webinar, and intend to measure the degree to which attendees found value in webinar participation and intentions to apply learnings through implementation of future Neighboring efforts upon completion of the webinar series in April 2010.

ACTION PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- National Conference on Volunteering and Service: 50% of conference participants that attended Neighboring workshops apply Neighboring skill acquired at conference in their local communities (Data will be collected in a survey in 3-6 months post conference to assess progress towards skill implementation)
- Three National Webinars: 50% of webinar participants will execute at least one Neighboring practice within their Affiliate or community (Data will be collected in a survey of all Webinar participants 3 -6 months after Webinar completion)



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PROGRESS ON ACTION PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

National Conference on Volunteering and Service: We administered a survey five months post conference (November 2009) to gather information from Neighboring workshop participants as well as previous recipients of Neighboring Task Force support to identify the degree to which a Neighboring skill acquired at Conference had been infused in local programming and to learn about additional training and support needs to implement Neighboring in their communities. However, the response to the survey was very poor with only 14 of the 173 invited individuals providing a response, producing a response rate of 8%. Due to the low response rate, we are unable to assess with any accuracy the percentage of conference workshop participants that applied Neighboring skills in their local communities. Despite this challenge, the key findings from this survey are presented below in Tables 11-13. Of the 14 respondents, 100% stated that they attended Conference workshops focusing on Neighboring, 50% have attended one or more webinar provided by HON Neighboring staff and 50% have participated in a support opportunity with a Neighboring Task Force member.

Table 11. Recruitment of resident as volunteers and beneficiaries

How often does your organization recruit volunteers that will also benefit from the volunteer service they perform? (example: Low income residents help to pack food boxes from food drive and at the end of the day they are recipients of a food box as well)	
Frequently (75 -100% of programs)	21%
Often (50 -74% of programs)	21%
Sometimes (25 -49% of programs)	21%
Occasionally (1-24% of programs)	21%
Never	14%



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Table 12. Organizational practices in local community

Rate the following statements about your organization using a scale of 1= Not at all true to 5= Very true					
My organization...	1	2	3	4	5
Understands the Neighboring concept	7%	0%	21%	29%	43%
Applies Neighboring strategies agency-wide in volunteer programming	7%	14%	36%	14%	29%
Applies Neighboring strategies in a particular volunteer program	8%	8%	15%	38%	31%
Is looking for an opportunity to introduce Neighboring into our programming.	15%	15%	8%	31%	31%
Is prepared to incorporate Neighboring into our work, if given proper technical assistance	0%	17%	25%	17%	42%
Engages community residents to design, implement and/or execute volunteer opportunities	0%	21%	7%	21%	50%

Table 13. Volunteer opportunity promotion

When recruiting volunteers, does your organization promote opportunities in the neighborhoods in which the volunteer service will be performed? <i>(example: Invites Hispanic residents to volunteer as literacy tutors for Hispanic Adults)</i>	
Yes	77%
No	23%

National Webinars: We did not implement a follow up survey following our first webinar, and intend to measure the degree to which attendees applied Neighboring strategies in their local communities upon completion of the webinar series in April 2010.

CHALLENGES/OBSTACLES

Best Practices Dissemination: Timing has been our challenge in the creation and dissemination of Neighboring best practices. As previously mentioned, the results of the survey administered in November 2009, were limited and didn't provide a clear, comprehensive picture of where best practices creation and dissemination efforts should be focused. However, the Task Force is moving ahead in creating materials without a truly accurate assessment of Neighboring engagement and support needed in the field. Key findings related to the best practice resources and technical assistance support noted by the 14 survey respondents is provided below in Tables 14 and 15.



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Table 14. Training and technical assistance topics of interest

Percentage of respondents who stated they would participate in training and technical assistance provided on topics listed.	
Best practices in Neighboring toolkit	79%
How to identify and train Neighborhood Volunteer/Project Leaders	79%
Capacity building in communities	71%
Workforce development and job training activities	71%
Defining and redefining outcomes	64%
Community needs assessments	57%
Integrating Neighboring into MLK Day 2010	57%
VITA/EITC	57%
Building and managing relationships	50%
Grassroots grant writing	50%
Integrating Neighboring into multi-cultural communities	50%
Inventory of past Neighboring sites programs	50%
Hispanic engagement	43%
Neighborhood associations	43%
Authentic engagement	29%
Resident asset development	29%
Kinship caregiver networks	21%
Voter registration	21%
Disaster response	14%
Census fulfillment	7%



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Table 15. Modes of training and technical assistance of interest

Percentage of respondents who indicate modes of training and technical assistance would be helpful or very helpful.	
Website (downloads and resources)	86%
Trainings/Workshops at National Conference on Volunteering and Service	79%
Webinars	77%
Conference calls	69%
Brochures	57%
Personal technical assistance by phone or e-mail	54%
Social networking site on Big Tent (HON Affiliates only)	33%

Conference Evaluation Activities: We experienced two challenges with administration of our conference evaluation activities. First, we were only able to collect a limited amount of onsite survey data. The overall National Conference on Volunteering and Service evaluation plan included sampling workshop sessions, of which 3 of 4 sessions that were Neighboring focused including the Immersion Learning Session were included in the sample. This prevented us from administering and collecting survey data from all workshop participants. Secondly, as we are an organization that actively uses volunteers to support our organizational activities, we experienced a challenge when one volunteer assigned to support data entry of conference evaluations did not manage the organization of paper surveys collected onsite limiting our ability to disaggregate findings by workshop type, including the reception.

Webinars: The primary obstacle we have faced in hosting Neighboring webinars are identifying individuals who are well versed in the language of Neighboring and yet can provide helpful and illustrative examples of how Neighboring can be implemented in the local community. Our goal is to provide a diversity of experts who are facing the challenges and successes of Neighboring on the ground the opportunity to share the experience with the network. However, since our midterm report, we have filled the 3 open positions on the Task Force with individuals from Affiliates and non Affiliates who have extensive experience in multicultural communities in Los Angeles, kinship communities in Columbus, OH, and faith communities in Baton Rouge, LA. We expect that their involvement will provide the expert training we are looking to provide through the webinars.



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Part C. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS TO DATE

The Neighboring Task Force has exceeded expectations of providing TA support to Affiliate and non Affiliate organizations. In the last six months, Neighboring Task Force members have collectively presented over 15 trainings on Neighboring to several hundred participants at trainings and conferences such as the:

- Michigan Super Conference (50 participants)
- Georgia Recovery Corps (15 participants)
- Meeting for Directors of Volunteer Centers
- Mississippi Commission Center for Nonprofits
- Keep Texas Beautiful Conference (80 participants)
- Northern Plains Initiative: Rural Conference
- Arizona State VISTA Office (150 VISTAs)
- Michigan Community Action Association
- AmeriCorps VISTA PSO
- Serving Learning Training
- AmeriCorps VISTA Supervisor Training
- OneStar Foundation: Governor's Volunteer Leadership Conference
- City Cultural Arts Center
- UNCA's Family Strengthening Awards Dinner
- HandsOn Network AmeriCorps VISTA PSO (New York, NY and Atlanta, GA)

In addition, we have provided monthly TA calls with MDS and SES grantees, developed 2 groups within the HandsOn Network Big Tent site and are in the development phase of the Neighboring Toolkit.

REACH PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- Technical Assistance: Neighboring Task Force members will be engaged as Technical Assistance support to the model demonstration sites as well as to other Network Affiliates who wish to implement or expand Neighboring strategies
- Task Force members will create and refine resources to support others in this work (Specific topics for support might include helping to develop a Neighboring volunteer program providing guidance on how to work with a specific ethnic community creating opportunities that support economic security, etc.

PROGRESS ON REACH PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

As referenced above, a great amount of technical assistance has been provided by the Task Force members through over 15 trainings on Neighboring to several hundred participants at trainings and conferences throughout the country. Since submission of our midterm report, we have selected 3 new Task Force members based on applications from 6 individuals. One



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of these individuals represents an Affiliate while the remaining two represents nonprofit organizations currently engaged in Neighboring type work. The Neighboring Task Force is in the process of collecting information and creating the materials necessary to bring Neighboring into communities across the country. They are slotted to complete this project in May.

ENGAGEMENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- Technical Assistance: Neighboring Task Force in collaboration with Hands on Network (HON) Neighboring staff will expose at least 25% of HON Affiliates to Neighboring strategies through workshops, trainings, and webinars, and Neighboring Task Force will provide follow-through Technical Assistance to 10% of HON Affiliates as they implement Neighboring strategies; and
- 75% of Task Force members serve as content developers for the social networking site to Affiliate Resource Center.

PROGRESS ON ENGAGEMENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

Monthly TA calls with MDS and SES grantees have also been offered. Neighboring staff continues to keep a pulse on the work of sub-grantees through monthly conference calls. This provides sub-grantees an opportunity to engage in peer exchange, to work through challenges and to update the national office staff on its monthly successes. It also allows the staff to understand how to support the sub-grantees and to share their great work. We have developed content and 2 discussion groups on Big Tent, the HON Affiliate Resource Center. Big Tent, is also a networking tool for Affiliates to engage in peer exchange and request support from the national office. One group was created for MDS sub-grantees and the other for the Neighboring Task Force to share and post resources for the field. Currently, 630 individuals from the Affiliate network are registered on Big Tent account.

ACTION PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- Technical Assistance: 25% of Affiliate recipients of Task Force Technical Assistance support will implement Neighboring practices designed to improve outcomes for families and communities (Data will be collected by survey of Affiliate recipients of Training and Technical Assistance support);
- Best Practices Tool Kit created by Task Force will be utilized by 100% of Model Demonstration sites; and
- 50% of HON Affiliate Network will utilize the resources available on the Neighboring social networking site on the Affiliate portal.



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PROGRESS ON ACTION PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

Through the survey implemented in November 2009, we identified that 7 of the 14 respondents (50%) were recipients of Task Force technical assistance and support. While we are unable to determine with any accuracy, if we achieved our action performance measure of 25% of recipients have implemented Neighboring, the results suggest that we are making progress towards this action performance measure. As indicated in Tables 11-13 above, 72% of respondents stated that it is true or very true that they 'understand the Neighboring concept'; 71% 'engages community residents to design, implement or execute volunteer opportunities'; 69% 'applies Neighboring strategies in a particular volunteer program'; and 42% 'applies Neighboring strategies agency-wide in volunteer programming'.

The Neighboring Task Force is still developing the Best Practices toolkit and it has therefore not been disseminated to MDS sub-grantees. However, similar content that will be included in the Toolkit is posted on Big Tent and is accessible by affiliates of HandsOn Network as well as MDS sub-grantees.

CHALLENGES/OBSTACLES

Timing is our primary obstacle in this area as our Task Force and sub-grantees are just approaching the midway point of their program year. While the initial months were spent in preparation and data collection, we expect the upcoming months to provide the time for our sub-grantees and Task Force to create the best practices toolkit and additional resources for posting on BigTent.