

Social psychologist says volunteers have clout

A social psychologist told 150 women volunteers last Monday that they are a model of what all working people will be like in the future.

"Volunteers will be an influence on the entire working world," University of Michigan Prof. Elizabeth Douvan told her audience at the all-day, What do women (volunteers) really want? conference in United Hebrew School in Southfield.

The program director of the Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research at U-M assured those in attendance that volunteers are characteristic of other motives besides competitiveness and profit.

"You want to build a sense of the self as generous, giving human beings. And when volunteers become a part of the working world, these characteristics will soften the working environment," she explained.

The purpose of the conference, sponsored jointly by the American Jewish Committee (AJC)-Detroit chapter and the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW)-Greater Detroit Chapter, was to discuss "How to raise the status of the volunteer in her — or his — eyes," said Jessie Stern of Franklin, "and in the eyes of the community."

THIS INCLUDES the tools of upgrading the volunteer status, Mrs. Stern continued, such as allowing tax deductions and tax credits for volunteer work.

In her morning talk, Mrs. Douvan said the volunteer represents the portion of the culture that isn't materialistic, according to Mrs. Stern, co-chairwoman for the day's activities.

And in her afternoon delivery, the professor detailed how the model role of the volunteer can lead to a solution for eliminating narcissism in the business world.

"For a while," Mrs. Douvan began, "it was thought that people who don't have to work for subsistence won't work. But volunteers have proven people can live meaningful lives when they don't have to worry about subsistence. They do work and contribute; they don't just sit around."

The mother of two teenagers sugges-

ted society eliminate the need for people to work for subsistence. "No one in the culture has to starve since food is plentiful. Let people work for three years, then allow them to work for anything they want — for their individual goals — be they fame, power, money or for the community," she said.

"THIS WOULD result in an enormous release of energy that would not exclude youths and senior citizens from the work force."

Separating narcissism from work would infuse the world with productive values, Mrs. Douvan thinks.

She did add, if this plan is instituted, some won't find what they want "and will sink to drinking, drugs, tennis and skiing," much to the amusement of the audience seated around the tables where they had lunch earlier.

She clarified that statement by saying anyone who concentrates only on a sport is lacking in being fulfilled in other areas.

Mrs. Douvan, the author of more than 30 books and articles, also recommended males and females work together, not remain enemies in the work-world. She told how a study of cultures in which men and women were segregated showed the cultures contained more violence.

"And isn't it interesting," she pointed out, "how male executives are offered leadership training classes to make them more sensitive while women are given assertiveness training classes to become more aggressive."

IN SEARCH of the question posed by the conference's title, three workshops were conducted in the morning: how do I feel about volunteering; tools to upgrade volunteer status; and the community — how is it changing, how am I changing.

Participants discussed their concerns about being properly trained, about their needs being considered by organizations, upgrading their status, and professionalizing their jobs.

One solution, which is now utilized throughout the country, is for colleges to give academic credit to volunteers for work experiences. One NCJW member is now attending Wayne State University School of Social Work full-time after being admitted on her credentials as a volunteer.

"Volunteers can get experience as accountants, fund-raisers, and public relations people," said Sheila Ordin of Southfield, president of the League of Jewish Women. "They are often well-rounded, diversified individuals from their experiences."

ACCORDING TO Sherri Lumberg of Southfield, the conference accomplished its goals. "I learned a lot of new ideas about legislation for volunteers and about academic credits."

Nancy Polk of Bloomfield Hills said volunteers do have a better image of themselves. But she suggested com-

munities become better educated on the worth of volunteers.

The two organizations, AJC and NCJW, joined together to sponsor the volunteer workshop because, explained Mrs. Stern, AJC has a task force on women which started in 1973 and because NCJW is a volunteer organization concerned with women's problems, among others.

The primary organizers of the conference were Beatrice Rowe, chairwoman of the AJC Task Force on Women; Helen Shevin, co-chairwoman; Mildred Grossman and Nadine Bell, program developers; Kathleen Struss, president of the AJC Detroit Chapter; Ruth Kroll, AJC assistant director for the Michigan area; and Bessie Mickelson, AJC secretary for Michigan.

Mrs. Kroll said the two organizations are examples of how "major women's organizations are making waves." AJC is co-sponsoring an inter-religious national conference in April at the Southfield Holiday Inn at which one of the workshops will discuss diversities and common interests of women.

Go abroad to study health care

By studying health care systems in other countries, students can better analyze the strength and weaknesses of this country's system, according to Dr. Marilyn Rosenthal, assistant professor of sociology at University of Michigan-Dearborn.

Comparing the health care systems in Great Britain and Sweden will be the theme of a field course being offered next summer by U-M-D and the U-M Extension Service in cooperation with Michigan State University.

The course is designed to meet the needs of students preparing themselves for careers in medicine, medical sociology, health care policy planning and administration, medical social work, nursing and allied health professions. The course will emphasize personal experiences.

Students will visit hospitals, talk to patients and physicians, and tour health care and research facilities in both London and Stockholm.

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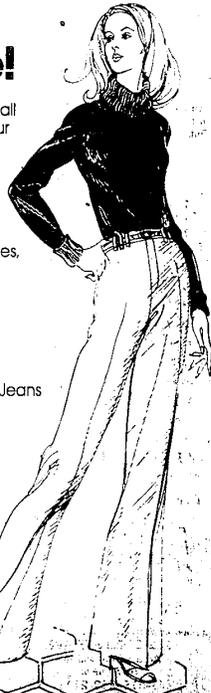
Mr. and Mrs. Gabriel Tiberio, of 2815 Quail Hollow, Farmington Hills, announce the engagement of their daughter Suanne, to J. Kevin Trimmer, son of Dr. and Mrs. Paul Trimmer of Bloomfield Hills.

The bride-elect is a University of Michigan graduate who is now attending law school in Indiana. Her fiance is a University of Michigan graduate who will graduate in May from the University of Illinois Law School. A summer wedding is planned.



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