

## **Workforce Education and Training MHSA Volunteer Program Report Data from: January 2013 through March 2015**

### **OVERVIEW**

The purpose of Workforce Education and Training programs is to create and maintain a public mental health workforce which includes clients and family members, and that has the size, diversity, skills, and resources to deliver compassionate, safe, timely and effective mental health services to all individuals who are in need. Programs need to contribute to increased prevention, wellness, recovery, and resiliency. The intent is to provide programs to address identified shortages in occupations, skill sets, and cultural competencies in public mental health programs. To help meet these objectives, Shasta County Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) launched the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Volunteer Program in fiscal year 2012-13.

### **PARTICIPANTS**

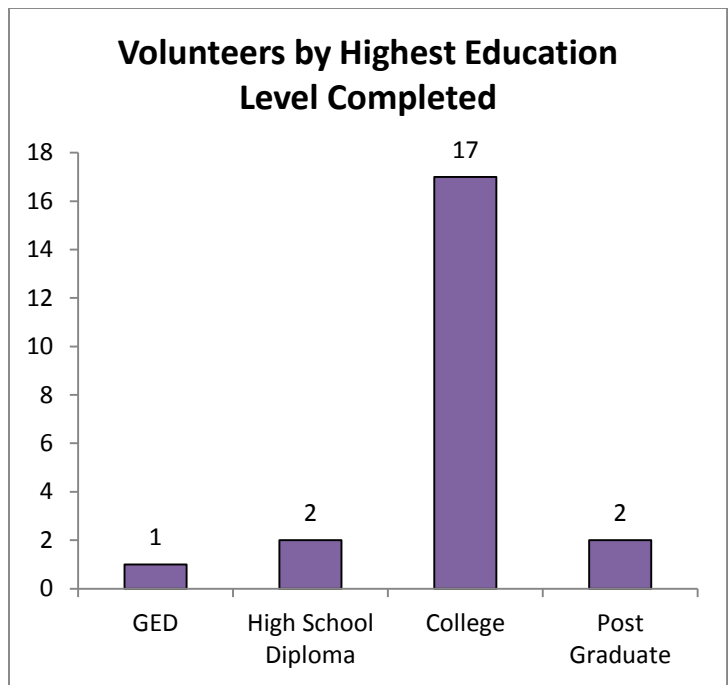
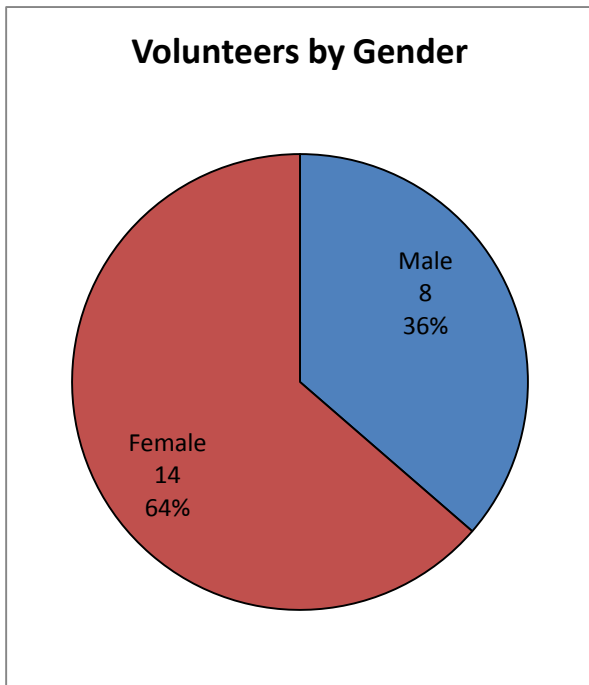
Potential participants were selected based on their completed application form, successful interview, and a comprehensive background check.

A total of 51 unduplicated applications for participation were received. Of those 51 applications, one was not complete. Four individuals chose not to complete the interview process. Of the remaining 46 applicants, 28 (61%) were fingerprinted during this report period. Four individuals are still in process, but have not completed fingerprinting yet. The remaining 14 individuals who were not fingerprinted were lost to follow-up or chose not to pursue volunteering further.

Of the 28 applicants who were fingerprinted, 22 individuals (79%) cleared Risk Management and were approved to be volunteers. Those who didn't receive clearance were linked with other volunteering venues that didn't require special clearance for working with vulnerable populations, including the Suicide Prevention Workgroup and the Community Education Committee. They were also provided with information regarding other resources in the community, such as the Department of Rehabilitation and Goodwill employment and training services, as well as information regarding the process of clearing up a criminal record (Penal Code Section 1203.4). An open invitation to reapply at a later date was extended to these individuals, provided they were able to successfully clear their record.

### **DEMOGRAPHICS**

Some demographic information was inadvertently not collected, such as age, race/ethnicity, languages spoken, and cultural groups. This data collection oversight will be addressed in future phases of the MHSA Volunteer Program. Additional refinement of the education levels completed by volunteers will also occur, in order to provide more useful information.



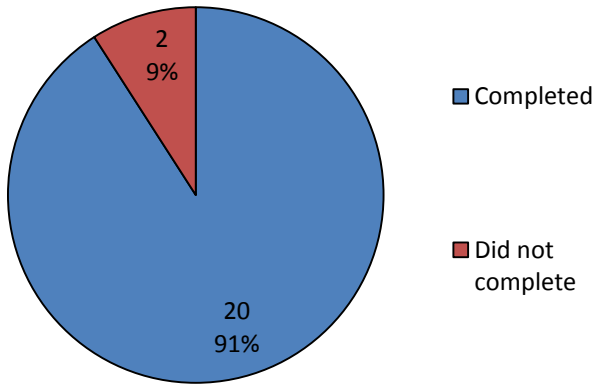
## PARTICIPATION LEVEL

### TRAININGS

All individuals who cleared background check were provided with an orientation to HHSA programs and services, and were asked to participate in mandatory trainings. The mandatory trainings required were changed and refined over the course of the nine quarters reflected in this report.

Each volunteer was also required to participate in at least two one-on-one navigator trainings with a Community Health Advocate or Community Mental Health Worker employed by the Volunteer Program. During these trainings, volunteers received hands-on skill building and/or instruction in five important areas: Creating a welcoming environment; Companionship; Symbol of hope and strength; Personal handoff to service providers; and Additional knowledge. Within these topics, a total of 23 specific targets were developed to assess a volunteer's ability to successfully navigate independently. Before navigating alone, a volunteer needed to demonstrate competency and ease in each target area as verified independently by Volunteer Program staff members.

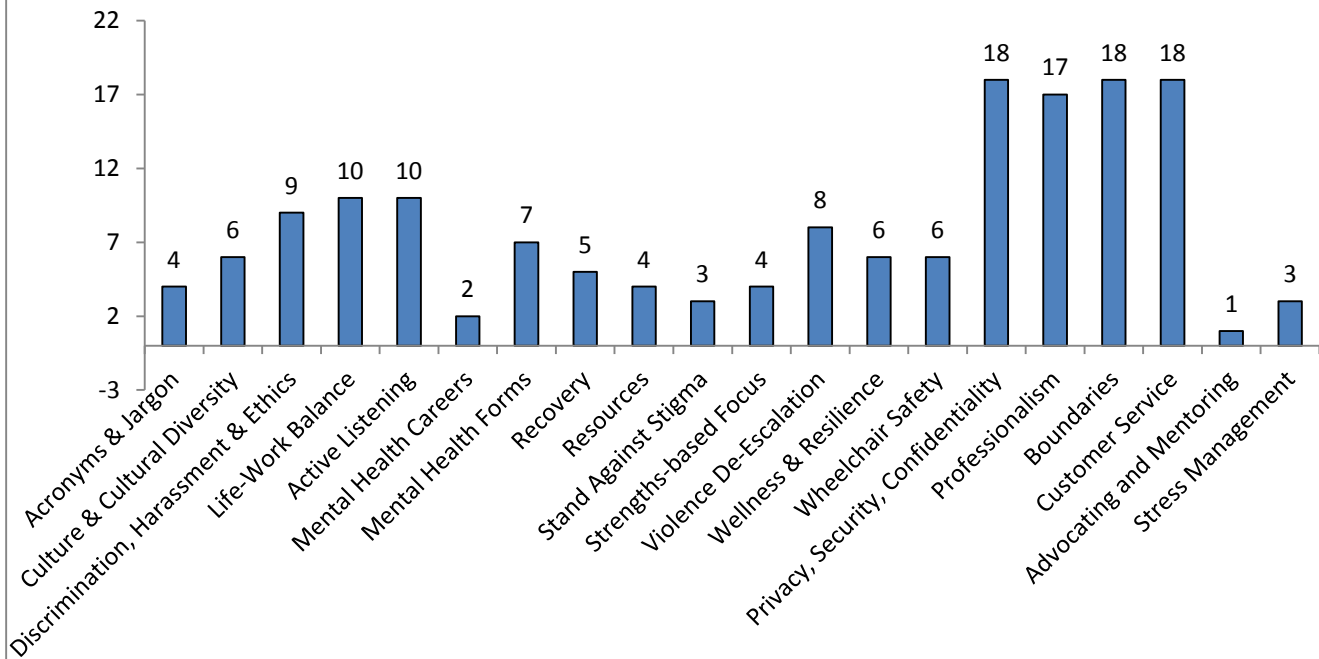
### Number of Volunteers Who Completed Mandatory Activities



Of the 22 applicants who were approved to be volunteers, 20 (91%) attended all or part of Orientation training. One applicant opted to leave the program before Orientation took place and another left right after completing mandatory trainings but before ever volunteering.

All volunteers were also encouraged to participate in optional 2-hour, once weekly, workplace educational trainings. Through discussions with the program’s Community Education Specialist, participants expressed appreciation for weekly trainings. They reported that they enjoyed learning more about workplace practices and found the trainings on stress management, life/work balance, and active listening especially relevant to their own wellness and recovery. They also enjoyed being able to share what they learned with other consumers.

### Number of Volunteers Who Completed Optional Trainings

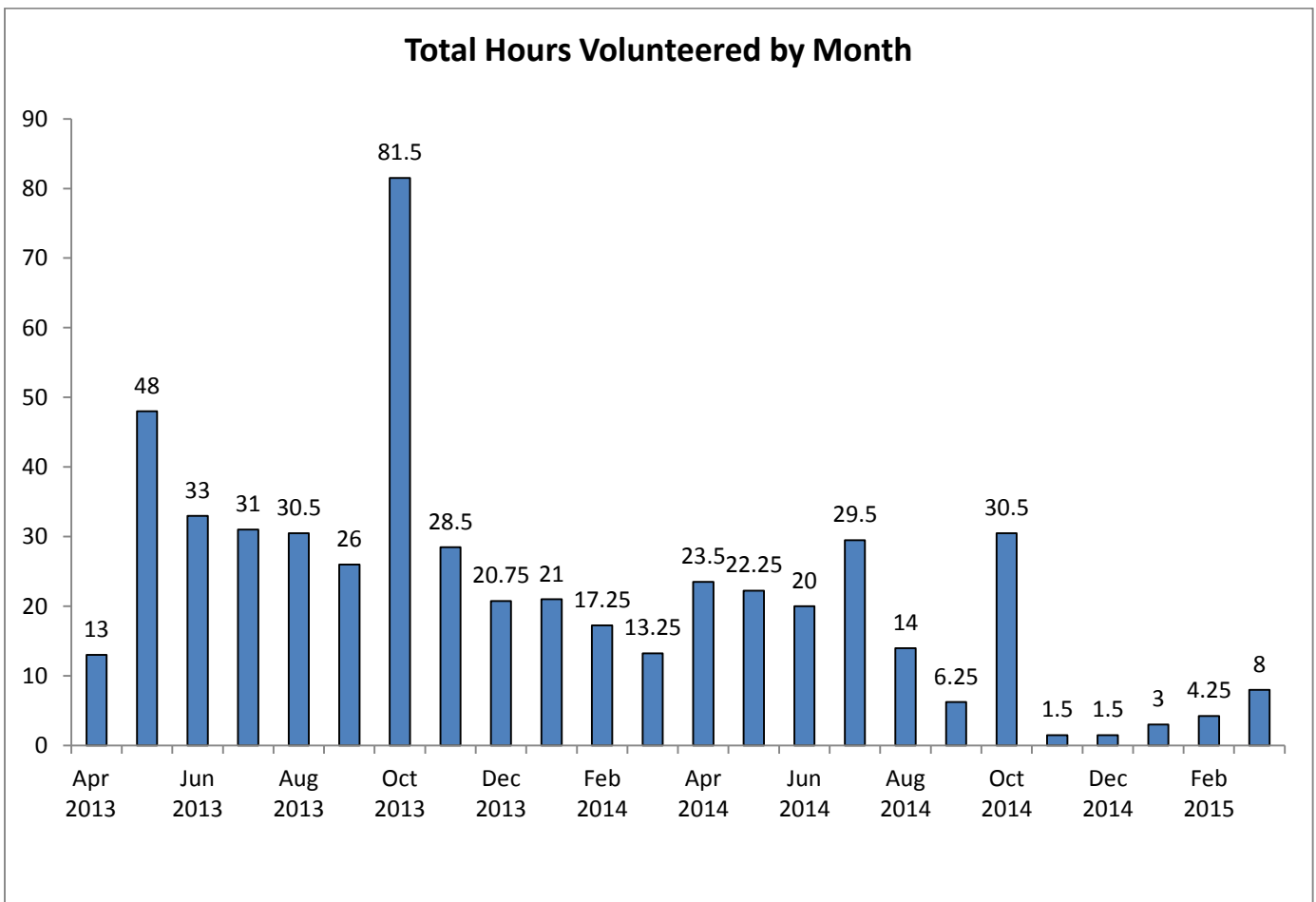


An additional component of Volunteer Program Training was the offering of all the optional classes to staff members at the two Shasta County Wellness Centers: Olberg Wellness Center in Redding and Circle of Friends in Round Mountain. These classes are used as an outreach tool, to heighten awareness of the Volunteer Program and seek referrals of interested and appropriate applicants from the wellness centers, as well as to offer additional educational opportunities to the wellness center staff members. During this report period, Circle of Friends staff members received two trainings, one on Life-Work Balance, and the other on Advocating and Mentoring. Each of the trainings at Circle of Friends had 5 participants in the class. Olberg Wellness Center did not request any training during this report period.

## VOLUNTEER HOURS

For the 20 individuals who completed all mandatory activities and actively engaged in volunteering, the average length of time for participating in the program was 230 days, or not quite 8 months. Looking at individuals, the length of time participating in the program ranged from 25 days to 554 days.

Volunteering began on 4/18/13 and over the length of the entire project, an average of 3 volunteers participated each month. Overall, a total of 528 documented hours were worked by the volunteers.



## OUTCOMES

### VOLUNTEER STATUS AT END OF REPORT PERIOD

A total of 20 individuals participated as active volunteers at some point during the report period. Fourteen participants withdrew from the program after participating in actual volunteer shifts. The reasons for ceasing volunteering were significant health issues, transportation and scheduling difficulties, unmet childcare needs, gaining employment, and deciding they were not interested in the mental health field.

During the course of volunteering, three of the volunteers gained employment in the mental health field. One volunteer decided to pursue additional education in the mental health field, and has returned to school with this goal in mind. Another volunteer who entered the program with the intention of pursuing a degree in psychology discovered that she was not interested in the mental health field at all. She has since switched to the business field.

These five volunteers whose mental health career path was directly influenced by engaging in the MHSA Volunteer Program represent 25% of program participants.

