

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF THE VOLUNTEER PROBATION
OFFICER PROGRAM IN THE INGHAM COUNTY,
MICHIGAN PROBATE COURT

Thesis for the Degree of M. S.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
JOHN HENRY CAULEY, Jr.

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ABSTRACT

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF THE VOLUNTEER PROBATION OFFICER PROGRAM IN THE INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN PROBATE COURT

By

John Henry Cauley, Jr.

During the 1960's the volunteer courts movement has grown and developed from a daring idea into a major force in the attempted rehabilitation of the youthful and young adult offender. In the last ten years citizen volunteers have donated their time in virtually every capacity in the court setting. However, the use of citizen volunteers in a one-to-one situation with individuals under court jurisdiction has proven to be the most widely used form of volunteer utilization. Persons serving in this capacity are generally referred to as volunteer probation officers (V.P.O.'s), volunteer sponsors or volunteer counselors, etc. Little knowledge has been accumulated, though, as to what it is specifically that volunteers do while serving as V.P.O.'s. Consequently, the objective of this study was to describe the role and activities of the volunteer probation officer, to investigate his attitudes towards the volunteer program and to draw a profile of the average V.P.O.

Ingham County, Michigan Probate Court/Juvenile Division was selected as the study site because of the author's long relationship with its volunteer probation officer program. The writer has been associated with the Office of Volunteer Programs at Michigan State University since its inception, and in that capacity he has been directly involved with the Ingham County Court's volunteer effort. From this vantagepoint, then, the author used personal observation, court records and a twenty-eight question open-end and fixed-response interview schedule to gather data pertinent to the objectives of the study.

Four observations were drawn from the analysis of the data that were gathered. First, there appears to be a lack of court preparation of the volunteer probation officer. Second, the interviewed V.P.O.'s seemed to experience a sense of conflict as to their role as either an authoritative or a non-authoritative representative of the court. Third, although there is obviously a large input of college student volunteers into the V.P.O. program, almost half of them had to resign from the program prior to the end of their assignment. Lastly, data indicate that many volunteers lose enthusiasm after the initial three months of service.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

INTRODUCTION

Automation has given us more leisure time and it must be planned for. We must find opportunities to put people in touch with people; help them to use their time in a meaningful way. The key is not to take man out of the system, but to make sure that he is involved in a meaningful way. People want to be involved where the action is.¹

The American people have long felt a need to be involved with their fellow men. Indeed, much of the early history of our country is a portrayal of people helping people. In order to survive the rigors of the early frontier, settlers were forced to seek the cooperation and assistance of one another in an effort to gain a foothold in this land. They gathered together for mutual defense, and shared with each other their energies and resources. This American spirit of cooperation has existed and flourished since that time. Modern voluntarism is but an outgrowth of this early American ethic, and its continued growth seems assured. In fact, the United States Department of Labor has "estimated that by 1980,

¹Mrs. Alexander Ripley, "The New Look and Challenge of Voluntarism," Volunteer Administration, IV (Summer, 1970), 10.

volunteer activity will contribute \$30 billion annually to the economy if counted as part of the gross national product."²

Americans have assumed the volunteer role ever more strongly during the last decade. In an effort "to be involved where the action is," citizens have sought the opportunity to be directly involved with the problems facing our society. Individual citizens have virtually demanded the right to assist in the solution of social problems and, hence, American voluntarism entered a new era in the early 1960's. Citizen involvement in the civil rights movement is well documented, and this effort marked the true beginning of the modern, direct-service volunteer. In addition, President John F. Kennedy announced the creation of the Peace Corps in 1961; hundreds of Americans responded to his call. This was a revolutionary idea when announced, but the idealism of youthful Americans has made the Corps a success. In a ten-year span the Peace Corps has grown from 800 volunteers serving nine countries in its initial year to a force of 9,000 volunteers serving 60 countries in

²Americans Volunteer, Manpower Administration, U.S., Department of Labor, Manpower/Automation Research Monograph No. 10 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1969), p. 1.

1971.³ A notable aspect of the Peace Corps' success and the civil rights movement is the fact that both are direct-service volunteer opportunities. The volunteer is put to work toward the solution of a significant problem. The re-establishment of the direct-service volunteer has been the recognizable result of recent voluntary programs.

Voluntary Action in Urban Communities: A Report from the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut Metropolitan Region has defined voluntarism as " . . . the traditional response of Americans to crisis."⁴ In our modern society social crises are continually brought to public attention via the mass media; Americans then respond to meet the needs of the situation. Perhaps one of the most serious crises facing modern America is the continual growth of crime. Ramsey Clark, in Crime in America, has said:

Crime is the ultimate human degradation. A civilized people have no higher duty than to do everything within their power to seek its reduction. We can prevent nearly all of the crime now suffered in America--if we care. Our character is at stake.⁵

Clark further states that

The most important statistic of all in the field of criminal justice is the one which tells us that

³Peace Corps/71 (Washington), pp. 2-3.

⁴Metropolitan Regional Council, Voluntary Action in Urban Communities: A Report from the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut Metropolitan Region (New York, 1970), p. 11.

⁵Ramsey Clark, Crime in America (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1970), p. 21.

probably four out of five of all felonies are committed by people convicted of crime before. The first crime was committed almost always as a teenager. Approximately half of all the persons released from prisons return to prison, many again and again.⁶

Although during the 1960's the American people responded wholeheartedly to the problems of the rehabilitation of the youthful and the young adult offender, it is still well known that youthful and young adult offenders frequently become hardened adult criminals. Our system of criminal justice does little to prevent this ever-recurring pattern. The majority of Americans are reluctant to finance the type of services and institutions that are necessary to rehabilitate our criminal offenders. However, a significant number of individuals, serving as volunteers in the volunteer courts movement, have sought to meet the challenge of rehabilitating the youthful and young adult offender before he becomes the hardened adult criminal. And they have had to face the simple fact that our current institutional approach to the rehabilitation of offenders has not been successful.

The service gaps in the system of juvenile justice and the rehabilitation of the offender traditionally and primarily have been attributed to: (1) the lack of sufficient numbers of well-trained and highly qualified personnel, and (2) the lack of adequate community services upon which the courts are partly, if not entirely, dependent. As such, understaffed, underpaid, and overburdened probation departments are unintentionally undermining the rehabilitative efforts of courts and correctional agencies. While it has been estimated that approximately 1 million youngsters

⁶Ibid., p. 55.

pass through the juvenile courts each year, only about 12,000 of an estimated 100,000 paid correctional workers render their services to youth outside of the institutional setting to those on probation and parole.⁷

Volunteers have stepped in to meet the needs of juvenile and adult misdemeanor courts in an effort to forestall the current progression from first offender to hardened criminal. Where there was no probationary system, volunteers have said, "let us serve." Where there was a probationary system that was overburdened and understaffed, volunteers have said, "let us assist." During the last ten years, volunteers have performed in every possible job or category of service within the court setting in an effort to assist in the rehabilitation of youthful and young adult offenders in order to prevent their further criminal careers. During the 1960's the volunteer courts movement gained strength throughout the United States. From less than five courts in 1960, the movement has grown to encompass an estimated 1500-2000 volunteer courts as we enter the seventies.⁸ In only ten years, the

⁷ Ivan H. Scheier and Leroy P. Goter, Using Volunteers in Court Settings: A Manual for Volunteer Probation Programs, Office of Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Development, Social and Rehabilitation Service, U.S., Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, JD Publication Number 477 (Washington: Government Printing Office, n.d.), p. 1.

⁸ Ivan H. Scheier (ed.), "Volunteer Courts Newsletter," III (June, 1970).

volunteer courts movement has developed from a daring idea in to a major force in the rehabilitation of youthful and young adult misdemeanor offenders.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Dr. Ivan H. Scheier, Director of the National Information Center on Volunteers In Courts, has estimated that 60-75 percent of all juvenile courts will utilize volunteers by 1972.⁹ There seems to be no question that the volunteer courts movement will continue to grow and expand. This is evident simply in the numbers of different volunteer jobs available in courts. Volunteers have assumed many roles from specialized assignments to very general tedious tasks. Medical doctors, psychologists, lawyers and psychiatrists have volunteered their professional services. In addition, individuals from virtually every background have served the court in one capacity or another--from volunteer probation officer and lay counselor to record keeper and pre-sentence investigator.

The Ingham County, Michigan Probate Court/Juvenile Division joined the volunteer courts movement in September 1968 by instituting a tutoring program in conjunction with the Office of Volunteer Programs at Michigan State

⁹Ivan H. Scheier and Louise H. Allen, Volunteer Courts in America: The New Decade 1971-1979 (Boulder: 1970), p. 1.

University. Since that time the court has instituted other volunteer programs, the most extensive being the Volunteer Probation Officer program (V.P.O. program). The V.P.O. serves in a one-to-one situation with a ward of the court. His role is to serve the needs of the child in conjunction with the guidelines of the court and in cooperation with the child's court-employed caseworker. Because the V.P.O. segment of the court's volunteer program has grown to be the largest, it is imperative that the program be systematically studied and investigated.

Little knowledge has been accumulated as to what it is specifically that volunteers do in their capacity as volunteer probation officers. What function exactly does the V.P.O. perform? Does he adhere to the guidelines established by the court? Does the court adequately prepare the volunteer for the situations that he encounters? How often does the average volunteer currently serving the court meet with his probationer? In what activities do the volunteer and the child participate? In order to assess the current program and plan for improvement, a descriptive analysis of the current volunteer probation officer program is called for.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of this study is explicit: to describe the role and activities of the volunteer probation

officer in the Ingham County Probate Court/Juvenile Division. Three basic issues will be investigated. First, I will determine what the volunteer probation officer actually does as a volunteer: in what activities do the volunteer and the probationer participate? how often do they meet? what specifically does the volunteer do to serve the probationer?

Second, I will investigate the attitudes of the volunteer probation officer towards the V.P.O. program: for instance, does the volunteer feel that the program is beneficial? does he feel as though he has been a success? has the volunteer experience changed or altered his conception of the criminal justice system?

Third, I will collect basic demographic data so that a profile of the average V.P.O. in the Ingham County program can be outlined. Information such as age, sex, education, occupation, etc., will be gathered.

It is emphasized that this study will deal only with the volunteer probation officer and his role in the Ingham County Probate Court. It is believed, though, that this study will lay the groundwork for a more sophisticated analysis of the Ingham County Program. This effort has not endeavored to measure the effectiveness of the volunteer in any way. It does not attempt to check the volunteer's influence on recidivism rates, nor does it attempt to view the V.P.O. program through

the eyes of the probationer--the recipient of the V.P.O.'s service. More time and greater resources are necessary to analyze in greater depth the true effectiveness of the volunteer probation officer program. By drawing a profile of the current V.P.O. and by detailing his activities and efforts, this initial investigation can serve as the foundation for a more sophisticated, in-depth study in the future. Dr. Ivan H. Scheier, Director of the National Information Center on Volunteers in Courts, has said: "We need to understand far better just what sorts of relationships do occur between volunteers and probationers."¹⁰ Through this effort, I hope to contribute to that understanding.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of the study is realized in the potential improvement in the total court volunteer program based on the study findings. Ingham County Probate Court/Juvenile Division is currently conducting a variety of volunteer programs. However, the court is devoting its greatest amount of volunteer and administrative resources to the development and continuation of the volunteer probation officer program. Consequently, a

¹⁰Ivan H. Scheier, "Needs of Research and Volunteer Programs," Institute On Research With Volunteers In Juvenile Delinquency, eds. Paul F. Zelhart and Jack M. Plummer, Arkansas Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (Fayetteville: May 13 and 14, 1970), p. 7.

need exists to begin an examination of this effort in an attempt to determine whether or not the court is maximizing its use of volunteer and administrative manpower. Prior to this study, no one had systematically inquired into the nature of the V.P.O. program; also, no study had raised the question of the advisability of the continuation of the V.P.O. program. It is anticipated that the results of this study will lay the groundwork for continued, more sophisticated analysis of the court's volunteer programs, and that the data collected will be utilized in the continuing improvement of the total volunteer effort.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is only the initial effort in what should be a comprehensive evaluation of the court's total volunteer effort. It deals only with one segment of the court's volunteer program--that being the volunteer probation officer program. Future explorations should consider the organization and administration of the volunteer programs in the Ingham County Court. Data should be collected on the attitudes of and the support provided by the court-employed caseworkers. In addition, a highly sophisticated study of the influence of volunteers on the attitudes of probationers should be conducted. In

actuality, this study only scratches the surface of the potential areas in need of investigation.

BACKGROUND OF STUDY

This writer is particularly interested in the operation, organization and continued development of the volunteer programs at the Ingham County Probate Court because of his current position as Director of the Office of Volunteer Programs at Michigan State University. In fact, the author was the principle contact person at M.S.U. in late summer 1968 when plans for the initial court volunteer programs were being developed. This first effort was a tutoring program utilizing M.S.U. college students recruited by the author. Volunteer tutors were assigned on a one-to-one basis with wards of the court. The children were brought to Michigan State University for one evening tutoring session per week. This session generally lasted about two hours, followed by a half-hour "coke break" in a campus grill. This first effort did not prove successful for a variety of reasons; however, as has been indicated, the court did not lose sight of the volunteer manpower potential both at Michigan State University and in the greater Ingham County area.

OVERVIEW OF COURT VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

Judge James T. Kallman in the 1969 Annual Report of the Ingham County Probate Court/Juvenile Division states:

The children who come to Juvenile Court need assistance from you. Our volunteer programs are a must to meet these needs, and your talents and abilities can offer these young people an important service.¹¹

Judge Kallman has clearly indicated his support for citizen volunteer programs, and under his direction a variety of efforts has been instituted since the initial tutoring program outlined above. The 1969 Annual Report further states:

It has long been recognized that most Juvenile Courts around the country had neither sufficient staff, resources or time, to cope with the ever increasing problems of delinquency and neglect. Ingham County Juvenile Court was no exception. As a partial solution to this problem, it has been recognized by many courts throughout the country including our own, that volunteers, carefully screened, trained and supervised could lend important assistance in many areas of treatment within the court.¹²

In 1969 Ingham County Probate Court created a Programs Department. A principal duty of this new department, which is coordinated by two full-time individuals under the supervision of the Director of Children's Services,

¹¹Ingham County Probate Court/Juvenile Division, Annual Report (1969), p. 3.

¹²Ibid., p. 32.

is to organize, coordinate and supervise court volunteer programs. The court's primary thrust to date has been in three main areas:

Volunteer Group Counseling: This program was established in January 1969 under the leadership of Dr. E. L. V. Shelley. Dr. Shelley is currently serving as Chief Psychologist and Special Consultant to the Ingham County Probate Court. He has formerly served as Chief Psychologist for Lansing Boy's Training School and as Director of Treatment for the Michigan Department of Corrections. Group counseling sessions are organized by Dr. Shelley at two locations in the community. Volunteers lead each group under his training and supervision. The court conducts sessions for both children and parents. The groups meet one evening per week, and are arranged around discussions of mutual problems and interests. The goal for the group sessions is to assist each member of the group to be better able to cope with his problems.

Volunteer Tutoring Program: The Volunteer Tutoring Program began in September 1968 in conjunction with the Office of Volunteer Programs at Michigan State University. In this first effort children assigned to the program were brought to the M.S.U. campus one evening per week. The program encountered difficulties, however, in the transportation of the children and in

the supervision of the volunteers. Consequently, the volunteer tutoring program is now conducted at the Ingham County Juvenile Home and the Ingham County Shelter Home where adequate supervision is available. In addition, these locations are located in the Lansing community and are more accessible than the M.S.U. campus to the court children. The program is currently serving approximately twenty children.

Volunteer Probation Officer Program:

The court now firmly believes that if there is an answer to juvenile delinquency and child neglect, it is to be found in community involvement and service, and treatment at the community level. The answer is not to be found in larger and more institutions. The Volunteer Probation Officer program is an attempt to involve the community in problems of youth.¹³

This court volunteer program has the greatest potential for involving the community in the rehabilitation of juvenile offenders because of its very structural organization. In this program volunteers are assigned one-to-one with selected court children in an effort to provide intensive probationary services to each child in the program. The potential for community involvement is greatest because a specific skill is not required; rather, the basic requirement is that the prospective volunteer be a mature, stable member of his community. This then, allows for a large number of volunteers and, consequently,

¹³Ingham County Juvenile Court, "Ingham County Juvenile Court Volunteer Programs" (n.d.), pp. 2-3. (Mimographed.)

the V.P.O. program has become the most extensive volunteer program in the court. Because it is the largest program and because it utilizes the greatest amount of community volunteer resources, this segment of the Ingham County Court's volunteer programs is the subject of this study.

OVERVIEW OF THE OFFICE OF VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

The Office of Volunteer Programs at Michigan State University was authorized by the Board of Trustees in November 1967. On January 2, 1968, the office was opened under the administrative jurisdiction of the Vice President for Student Affairs. It was created in recognition of the increased amount of student voluntary activity and of the need to provide coordination and continuity among the various volunteer projects.

The Office of Volunteer Programs is organized into two operational units: the M.S.U. Volunteer Bureau and the M.S.U. Volunteer Transportation Pool. The volunteer bureau operates in essentially the same manner as a large city volunteer bureau. It receives requests for volunteer assistance, recruits volunteers from the campus community, provides initial orientation and training, and makes the appropriate assignment or referral. The transportation pool is a fleet of twelve university vehicles used to transport volunteers from the campus to the community and back to campus.

The input of faculty, staff and student volunteers recruited through the M.S.U. Office of Volunteer Programs has been a continued source of support for the volunteer programs operated by the Ingham County Probate Court. Of the individuals currently serving as volunteer probation officers, better than 60 percent have been recruited from the M.S.U. community. Considering this trend, it seems likely that volunteers from Michigan State University will continue to play a major role in the Ingham County Court's volunteer effort, and because of the existence of the Office of Volunteer Programs, the court will continue to rely on M.S.U. for volunteer manpower. The continuation of the court's volunteer effort, thus, seems to be assured and, therefore, an examination of that effort is in order.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

TYPES OF LITERATURE

The literature related to the volunteer courts movement is basically divided into three categories: popular, opinion and research literature. The popular literature is material prepared for publications of a popular interest such as The Reader's Digest, Challenge, and The Lion. The content of this material is informative in nature, and is for the most part concerned with telling the story of the volunteer movement. Examples of this type of literature are two articles by Joe Alex Morris on the Royal Oak, Michigan Court Volunteer Program. His articles, "Royal Oak Aids Its Problem Youth" and "Big Help For Small Offenders," appeared in the October 1965 and April 1968 issues of The Reader's Digest respectively. The purpose of popular literature is to spread the idea of the volunteer court movement and it has little use for research or practical purposes.

The opinion literature, rather than being produced by professional journalists, is written by and for the practitioners in the volunteer courts movement. An

early pioneer in the volunteer courts movement and one of its most prolific authors is Dr. Ivan H. Scheier, Director of The National Information Center on Volunteers in Courts. Dr. Scheier publishes the bi-monthly "Volunteer Courts Newsletter," and has written for several national publications such as Federal Probation and Crime and Delinquency. In addition, Dr. Scheier has been the driving force behind the publication of two manuals on the use of volunteers in courts: Using Volunteers in Court Settings: A Manual for Volunteer Probation Programs and Volunteer Programs in Courts: Collected Papers on Productive Programs.

Essentially, the opinion literature serves as a means of communication among the practitioners in the volunteer courts movement. Within its pages individual programs are described and explained; in addition, new techniques, ideas and training methods are publicized in the hope that others will take up the volunteer cause. Moreover, opinion literature is written for the practitioner and for the court administrator who has recently begun or is about to start a court volunteer program. This latter aim of the literature is exemplified by the two manuals compiled by Ivan Scheier, and by Concerned Citizens And A City Criminal Court by Judge Keith J. Leenhouts. Leenhouts' booklet explains in detail the

operation of the total volunteer program in the Royal Oak, Michigan District Court.

Finally, the volunteer court movement has begun to reap the benefits of actual systematic social research of several court volunteer programs. Unfortunately, however, the field of court voluntarism has grown much more rapidly than the research effort. The movement has progressed on the basis of the popular and opinion literature, rather than on the sound knowledge of social research findings. What research has been conducted demonstrates that there are several excellent court volunteer programs. However, it is not certain whether the entire court volunteer movement is as well-organized and as well-administered as those programs whose administrators were concerned enough to attempt valid research examination. It is imperative, therefore, that many more studies of all aspects of the volunteer courts movement be initiated in order to further validate and legitimize the movement if it is indeed worthy of praise and continuation. It is encouraging to note, however, that there are forces underway to direct more and more of the research effort toward an examination of the volunteer courts movement; this effort will be outlined in the following pages.

BRIEF HISTORY OF PROBATION

In its history, probation as a method of criminal rehabilitation has come full circle with regards to the people who have operated with its code. Probation was instituted by volunteers; yet after formal authorization as a rehabilitative practice by the legislators of the several states, the probationary system has moved toward greater professionalism. Its remunerated officers have occupied themselves with striving for professional status and high standards. But finally, in an effort to meet the manpower shortage, created as a result of the scarcity of those who can meet this status and its implied standards, the volunteer has returned to the court--not as a replacement for, but as an assistant to the professional probation officer already there.

It is significant that the entire concept of probation developed as a result of the efforts of one individual and his followers who served as volunteers in the early courts of Boston. In August 1841 John Augustus, a Boston shoemaker, posted bail for a common drunkard; the court then agreed to release the individual to Augustus for a period of three weeks after which time the man would have to appear for sentencing. In Augustus' own words:

. . . He [the drunkard] told me that if he could be saved from the House of Correction, he never again would taste intoxicating liquors; there was such an

earnestness in that tone, and a look expressive of firm resolve, that I determined to aid him; I bailed him, by permission of the Court. He was ordered to appear for sentence in three weeks from that time. He signed the pledge and became a sober man; at the expiration of this period of probation, I accompanied him into the courtroom; his whole appearance was changed and no one . . . could have believed that he was the same person who less than a month before had stood trembling on the prisoner's stand. . . . The judge expressed himself much pleased with the account we gave the man, and instead of the usual penalty,--imprisonment in the House of Correction,--he fined him one cent and costs, amounting in all to \$3.76, which was immediately paid . . .¹

This incident marked the beginning for John Augustus of many years of volunteer service to the people of Boston. Between 1841 and his death in 1859 Augustus worked with over 1900 men, women and children who had been called before the Police or Municiple Courts of Boston.

Augustus' true devotion to his cause, and his clear status as a volunteer are evident in his following comments:

I devote my time daily, and often a large portion of the night, in the performance of the various labors which fall within my province. I am no agent for any sect, society, or association whatever. I receive no salary, neither have I ever received a dollar for any service as a salary, nor do I know of any individual who ever became responsible for me, even to the amount of a dollar; I am therefore not accountable to any sect, society or individual for the manner in which my efforts have been applied.²

¹Charles Lionel Chute and Marjorie Bell, Crime, Courts, and Probation (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1956), p. 37.

²Ibid., p. 40.

Modern probationary services are directly descended from the efforts of John Augustus. In fact, his methods of accepting individuals for probation have served as a foundation for current practices in this field. Charles L. Chute, formerly Executive Director of the National Probation Association, has said:

John Augustus originated in rudimentary form many of the techniques of probation officers and other social workers today, including preliminary social investigation, tactful interviewing, family case-work, foster-home placement, protective work for women and children, detention, and cooperation with schools, employers, institutions and social agencies.³

John Augustus and the few pioneers that followed him set the example for the need of regular probationary services. In 1878 Massachusetts passed the first statute authorizing such services; this statute required the Mayor of Boston to appoint a paid probation officer who would be responsible to the chief of police.

The powers granted to this officer were extensive. He was required 'to attend the sessions of the courts of criminal jurisdiction held within the county of Suffolk, investigate the cases of persons charged with or convicted of crimes and misdemeanors, and to recommend to such court the placing on probation of such persons as may reasonably be expected to be reformed without punishment.' The last words are significant. Probation was conceived of not as punishment, but reformative treatment. With the judgment of the court suspended, every encouragement to 'make good' was offered and for the first time in

³Ibid.

history a social worker (though he was not called so then) was introduced as an important officer of the court.⁴

Twenty years later, in 1898, Vermont was the second state in the country to adopt the concept of probation, and to formally enact legislation calling for the appointment of probation officers. Rhode Island and Minnesota followed in 1899. Since that time virtually every state has gradually enacted legislation providing for probationary services.

Another important development which occurred in 1899 was the creation of the first juvenile court law in Illinois. The Illinois statute called for probation services as the main approach to the rehabilitation of youthful offenders. By 1910 thirty-six states had adopted legislation creating juvenile courts and providing for the use of probation as a method of rehabilitation for youthful offenders.

The greatest drawback to the use of probation as a rehabilitative measure is the fact that the current system of probationary services is not adequate to meet the needs that exist. Probation officers in many jurisdictions have as many as 100 offenders on probation to supervise. In addition to the supervision of offenders, most probation officers are required to prepare presentence

⁴Charles L. Chute, "The Development of Probation in the United States," Probation and Criminal Justice, ed. Sheldon Glueck (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1933), p. 229.

and other reports which diminishes their time to serve in a supervisory capacity. Not only is the probation system overworked, but also in many instances probationary services are nonexistent. This lack of probationary services is the general case in most misdemeanor courts in our country. The unfortunate fact is, as Ramsey Clark has made clear, that most individuals convicted of felony offenses have a long prior record of convictions for misdemeanor offenses. Perhaps if probationary services could be made available at the misdemeanant court level, we would be able to save many individuals from becoming felony offenders.

. . . the fact is that in at least 90 percent of our lower courts there is no money for a probation or rehabilitation program of any kind. The defendant may be released 'on probation,' but, unless he commits another offense and is brought back into court, that is the last the judge will hear of him. He gets no help and no guidance from the court. No investigation is made of his family background, and no effort is made to discover the underlying reasons for his violations of the law. That is the pattern in about 90 percent of our lower courts.⁵

Recognizing the importance of and the need for adequate probationary services, the President's Commission On Law Enforcement And Administration Of Justice has made the following recommendation:

All courts, felony and misdemeanor, should have probation services. Standards for recruitment and training of probation officers should be set by the States,

⁵Joe Alex Morris, First Offender: A Volunteer Program for Youth in Trouble with the Law (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1970), pp. 7-8.

and the funds necessary to implement this recommendation should be provided by the States to those local courts that cannot finance probation services for themselves.⁶

The Commission further recommends:

All jurisdictions should examine their need for probation and parole officers on the basis of an average ratio of 35 offenders per officer, and make an immediate start toward recruiting additional officers on the basis of that examination.⁷

Regardless of the recommendations made by the President's Commission On Law Enforcement And Administration Of Justice, it seems certain that more adequate probationary services will not be available for some time. We are faced with a difficult situation in which there is either a lack of resources to hire trained personnel, or a lack of trained personnel to hire even if the resources are available. Judge Wilfred W. Nuernberger of the Lancaster County Court in Lincoln, Nebraska has said: "There aren't enough professional staff now and there is little possibility that our professional training schools will be able to keep up with the increased demand for services . . . " ⁸ Gary Auslander, in his Master's Thesis entitled

⁶The President's Commission On Law Enforcement And Administration Of Justice, The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1967), p. 144.

⁷Ibid., p. 167.

⁸Volunteer Programs In Courts: Collected Papers on Productive Programs, eds. Ivan H. Scheier and Others,

"The Volunteer in the Court," has reached a similar conclusion. He says: "The prospects of ever securing a sufficient number of professionals in the field of corrections appears to be impossible."⁹ These comments are confirmed by the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare in its report, The Crisis of Qualified Manpower for Criminal Justice: An Analytic Assessment with Guidelines for New Policy. The report states:

Probation/parole will probably continue to experience a serious shortage of qualified manpower. This pessimistic conclusion is based on an appraisal of existing resources and strategies: (1) social work education will probably continue to supply only a small pool of the M.S.W. graduates; (2) major gains cannot be expected in the near future from improved recruitment efficiency; (3) degree programs in corrections and public administration will furnish limited supplementary pools of manpower.

At the same time, the need for trained probation/parole personnel is apt to increase as: (1) the population expands; (2) the official crime rate is not reduced (and perhaps continues to rise); and (3) probation and parole are viewed as preferable (and cheaper) alternatives to incarceration.¹⁰

Office of Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Development,
Social and Rehabilitation Service, U.S., Department of
Health, Education and Welfare, JD Publication Number 478
(Washington: Government Printing Office, 1969), p. 7.

⁹Gary Auslander, "The Volunteer in The Court" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Illinois, 1969), p. 7.

¹⁰Herman Piven and Abraham Alcabes (eds.), The Crisis of Qualified Manpower for Criminal Justice: An Analytic Assessment with Guidelines for New Policy, Volume 1, "Probation/Parole," Office of Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Development, Social and Rehabilitation Service, U.S., Department of Health, Education and Welfare, JD Publication Number 564 (Washington: Government Printing Office, n.d.), p. 37.

Finally, a significant aspect of the history of probation is its continual striving for professionalism. As early as 1907 an effort was under way to create a national organization of probation officers. Charles L. Chute reports that

On the afternoon of June 17, 1907, a group of fourteen probation officers met in Plymouth Church, Minneapolis, at the time of the National Conference of Charities and Correction 'for the purpose of discussing the advisability of forming a National Association of Probation Officers.' ¹¹

The association was formally organized and bylaws were adopted at a meeting in June 1909. The work of the association is still in effect today through the efforts of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency which is making great efforts to upgrade the training of professional probation officers. The interesting and somewhat amazing fact is that in the probation officer's striving for professionalism, the volunteer has been removed from the scene. Ironically, probation as a practice was begun by volunteers, but as it has grown as a profession, the volunteer has ceased to exist. It has only been in the last five years that the volunteer has returned to the court in significant numbers, and that the true value of the volunteer has been recognized. The President's Commission On Law Enforcement has said:

¹¹Chute and Bell, Crime, Courts, and Probation, p. 112.

There is . . . great promise in employing subprofessionals and volunteers in community corrections. Much work performed today by probation and parole officers could be effectively handled by persons without graduate training in social work or the behavioral sciences. . . . The use of subprofessionals and volunteers could significantly reduce the need for fully trained officers.¹²

In fact, the Commission makes a specific recommendation in favor of the use of volunteers and subprofessionals: "Probation and parole services should make use of volunteers and subprofessional aides in demonstration projects and regular programs."¹³

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE VOLUNTEER COURTS MOVEMENT

The volunteer courts movement experienced its true beginning in 1841 through the work of John Augustus and, as has been explained, the movement was quickly replaced with the paid probation officer. For sixty years, from 1900 until 1960--the growth period of paid professional probationary services, the volunteer was rarely seen in the court. However, the growth of probation services has not kept pace with the increasing need for them. To meet the professional manpower shortage, the volunteer returned to the court in early 1960.

¹²The President's Commission On Law Enforcement And Administration Of Justice, Challenge of Crime, pp. 167-68.

¹³Ibid., p. 168.

A pioneer of the modern volunteer court era is a man who is deeply committed to the volunteer concept. While serving as a municipal court judge in Royal Oak, Michigan, Keith J. Leenhouts was concerned with the situation facing him and his court. He was newly elected to his position, and troubled about his lack of alternatives when dealing with young misdemeanor offenders. In 1959 Royal Oak had no professional probationary services available to offenders brought before Judge Leenhouts. This situation left Leenhouts with only three alternatives when an individual brought before his court was adjudicated guilty: the judge could sentence the offender to a period of incarceration, fine the individual, or place him on probation. However, since Royal Oak did not have a professional probation staff, the third alternative was not an adequate rehabilitative measure.

Faced with this dilemma, Judge Leenhouts discussed his concerns with several close friends. At this meeting the participants asked:

What could we do about it? [the lack of probationary services] The eight, all expert counselors, agreed to try to change the system by accepting a caseload of five probationers each. In early 1960 the Michigan Corrections Commission appointed one of them chief probation officer and approved the plan to use volunteers. We started assigning probationers to them.¹⁴

¹⁴Keith J. Leenhouts, "Royal Oak's Experience With Professionals and Volunteers in Probation," Federal Probation, XXXIV (December, 1970), p. 45.

This was the beginning of the modern volunteer courts movement.

Unknown to Leenhouts, other courts had experimented with the use of volunteers during the 1950's. In addition, Judge Horace B. Holmes instituted a volunteer program in his court in Boulder, Colorado in 1961. Other pioneer programs were beginning in other parts of the country. This early period of the modern volunteer courts movement was characterized by struggling programs striving for success. The pioneers of the early part of the modern volunteer courts era operated without knowledge of their counterparts in most cases. There was little sharing of ideas of programs since the various courts were unknown to one another. Two situations occurred to help overcome this lack of communication and sharing of knowledge and expertise. First, in 1965 the Board of Christian Social Concerns of the Methodist Church offered Judge Leenhouts \$24,000 to help spread the word of the volunteer courts movement, and second, in 1966 Boulder County Juvenile Court received a grant of \$190,000 from the U.S. Office of Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Development. Dr. Ivan H. Scheier was appointed project director of the Boulder Juvenile Delinquency Project which was to test the effectiveness of volunteers in the Boulder program. The grant also provided funds for the creation of the National Information Center On Volunteers In Courts (N.I.C.O.V.I.C.).

Leenhouts used the funds donated by the Methodist Church "for travel, production of literature and films, and similar expenses that would help to tell the story of the Royal Oak program."¹⁵ After Leenhouts' program had been outlined, the decision was made to call it Project Misdemeanant. Through Project Misdemeanant, Leenhouts enthusiastically carried the word of the Royal Oak program to anyone who would listen. In December 1967 Leenhouts was contacted by John W. Leslie, former president of the Signode Corporation. Leslie had heard about Leenhouts and his work, and was interested in providing additional support. With Leslie's financial backing, Project Misdemeanant was incorporated, and in 1969 Keith Leenhouts resigned his seat on the bench in order to devote full-time to spreading the court volunteer concept as president and executive director of Project Misdemeanant Foundation, Inc. (The name was changed to Volunteers In Probation, Inc. in early 1970.)

While Leenhouts was busy organizing Project Misdemeanant, Dr. Ivan Scheier was in the process of establishing the National Information Center as an information dissemination point in the west; the Center was established in Boulder, Colorado at the Boulder County Juvenile Court. Dr. Scheier also began to use his resources to

¹⁵Joe Alex Morris, First Offender: A Volunteer Program for Youth in Trouble with the Law (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1970), p. 132.

spread the word of the volunteer courts movement. In 1967 Dr. Scheier moved ahead on two fronts, both of which significantly influenced the growth and development of the movement. First, a National Conference of Volunteer Courts was called. Second, the "Volunteer Courts Newsletter" was established.

More specifically, the aims of the conference were:

- (1) An opportunity for personal contact among those involved in court volunteer programs.
- (2) Exploration of the various programs directed by the participants, including the goals, philosophies, and assumptions underlying these programs.
- (3) Discovery and clarification of questions of common interest in recruiting, training, and utilization of court volunteers.
- (4) Determination of basic areas of consensus, as an aid to courts considering the use of volunteers in the future.
- (5) Laying the basis for improved future communication among volunteer courts.¹⁶

The conference did indeed accomplish many of these goals. Its most significant success was the fact that the conference served as a catalyst to gather the leaders of the volunteer courts movement together for the first time. Finally, the pioneers of the modern volunteer courts era had the opportunity to meet together and share their ideas and experiences.

It was at this time, too, that Ivan Scheier began publication of the "Volunteer Courts Newsletter." The Newsletter, since its inception, has served as the primary communication device for the members of the volunteer

¹⁶Scheier and others (eds.), p. 2.

courts movement. It is currently in its fourth volume and during its short history the Newsletter has played an extremely valuable role. Through its frequent publication the current volunteer courts are quickly kept abreast of all of the latest developments and happenings from around the country.

OUTSTANDING COURT VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

Royal Oak, Michigan

Much has been written in the preceding pages about Judge Keith J. Leenhouts and the Royal Oak volunteer program; yet it seems as though the entire story will never be told. Judge Leenhouts likes to speak frequently of volunteers as "inspirational personalities." Judge Leenhouts is such a personality. His enthusiasm for the volunteer courts movement seems endless, and the Royal Oak program that he began serves as an inspiration to the entire volunteer courts movement.

In April 1960 Leenhouts received the permission of the Michigan Corrections Commission to begin using volunteers from the community to provide probationary services to the young adult offenders coming before his court. Originally eight close friends of the Judge were recruited; however, by the end of the first year of operation over thirty-five individuals were serving as volunteer sponsors (V.P.O.'s). It was at this time that Leenhouts recruited

a close friend who was a retired businessman to serve as an administrator in a volunteer capacity for the program.

The original eight volunteers each agreed to accept five young men with whom to work. As the program has expanded, however, the caseload of each volunteer has been reduced to one. Today the Royal Oak program boasts at any one time an average of 100 active volunteer sponsors performing probationary services. In addition to the individual serving as volunteer sponsors, the Royal Oak program consists of several full-time retirees who work for the amount of compensation allowed under social security regulations (approximately 60 cents an hour), several part-time paid professional counselors, a part-time paid staff psychiatrist, a volunteer employment counselor, several volunteer psychiatrists and psychologists, volunteer attorneys and several community financial contributors. The city of Royal Oak receives complete probationary services for its young adult offenders because of the efforts of these individuals who are willing to donate their time to the volunteer effort.

In April 1965 Royal Oak received a five year, \$120,000 grant from the National Institute of Mental Health to test the effectiveness of the volunteers. The results of the research are impressive. The major effort of the Royal Oak research consisted of a comparative recidivism study of all 1965 probationers in the Royal

Oak court (some of whom had V.P.O.'s) and of probationers in a comparable control court in another state (who did not have volunteer probationary service). The period studied was from January 1, 1965 to September 30, 1969. Of the offenders in the control court's jurisdiction, 49.8 percent committed one or more subsequent offenses during the study period, while in Royal Oak only 14.9 percent of the offenders committed one or more subsequent offenses during this same time.¹⁷ These results of the Royal Oak research attest to the effectiveness of the court volunteer effort.

Boulder, Colorado

Judge Horace B. Holmes of the Boulder County Juvenile Court did have a paid probation staff of two individuals when in 1961 he began to use volunteer probation officers. His idea "was to expand these services [performed by paid probation staff] by having volunteers work correctively and preventively with juvenile offenders."¹⁸ In addition,

The court's services were expanded by volunteers who administered various rehabilitative programs, did audiological testing, led group discussions, provided legal services and medical services, kept

¹⁷Morris, First Offender, p. 129.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 184.

records, did psychological testing, did tutoring, or performed other needed services.¹⁹

Perhaps the greatest success of the Boulder volunteer effort was the drive to establish the Attention Home. The Home is a facility for the short-term placement of delinquent children, rather than a facility for short-term detention such as the Boulder County Jail's juvenile quarters. Attention, Inc. acquired one large house from a local church for \$1.00 per year rent in 1966. Since that time two additional homes have been obtained, and although each home has paid house parents, volunteers are responsible for the development of educational and recreational programs for the children currently living there.

In 1967 Boulder County received funds from the Office of Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Development, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare to initiate an examination of the impact of the volunteer program on juveniles.

A summary of the research study compiled by the court called the results 'encouraging,' and added:

Indications are quite clear that volunteers reduce the need for local and state incarceration, while still keeping recidivism rates down. Delinquency proneness, as measured by a nationally standardized test, is either held steady or decreased in our probationers when volunteers are used. When volunteers are not used, delinquency proneness increases between the beginning and the end of probation.²⁰

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 191.

Denver, Colorado

In 1966 Denver County Court, Judge William H. Burnett presiding, had eleven judges and no probation officers. Judge Burnett had had the opportunity to talk to Keith Leenhouts on several occasions, and he was interested in Leenhouts' enthusiasm for volunteers in the courts. Burnett applied to the U.S. Department of Justice and was awarded

a grant of \$156,604 to create and operate for a two-year period a demonstration-research project . . . the project was viewed as a first step toward testing the feasibility of a volunteer probationary program in a large city.²¹

Judge Burnett was made Director of the Volunteer Counselor Program, and a small staff of professional counselors was hired to work with the volunteers. Burnett's project was begun in cooperation with the Graduate School of Social Work of the University of Denver and the Department of Sociology of the University of Colorado. The University of Denver, under the direction of Professor James Jorgensen, prepared curriculum for a three-day training program for all volunteer counselors. The University of Colorado Department of Sociology designed the research component of the project.

The results of Denver's two-year research study were highly encouraging. The Control Group of misdemeanants, who were given tests at the beginning and end of the two-year period but were not placed on

²¹Ibid., p. 169.

probation, had a slightly higher mean number of arrests (3.17) prior to the study. At the end of the study, this group showed very little improvement, with an arrest rate of 3.00 per year. The Experimental Group, which took the tests at the same times but were placed on probation, had approximately the same arrest rate (2.90) at the beginning of the study, but significantly reduced it during the two years to 1.36. ' . . . Since the lay counselor is the experimental variable given only to the Experimental Group, it is suggested that this one facet of probation is having the desired effect.'²²

The Denver results confirmed the fact that ~~volunteers~~ can be effective as had already been demonstrated in Boulder and Royal Oak. The important difference in the case of Denver is that the volunteer court program was successful in a large metropolitan area--a setting previously thought unsuitable for the use of volunteers in courts.

RECENT RESEARCH AND CURRENT TRENDS

The most outstanding recent research has been highlighted in the preceding section. However, in addition to these efforts there are other forces underway attempting to clarify the need for and to provide support to further volunteer courts research. On May 13 and 14, 1970 The Arkansas Rehabilitation Research and Training Center of the University of Arkansas sponsored an "Institute On Research With Volunteers In Juvenile Delinquency." The preface to the proceedings, which

²²Ibid., pp. 177-78.

have been published under the same title, states: "This conference, hopefully, marks the beginning of a more general exchange of research information on volunteer court programs."²³

At the institute, Ivan Scheier, speaking on the "Needs Of Research And Volunteer Programs," said:

However much researchers need volunteer courts, the courts need researchers more. New on the scene as we are, we face pressing problems every day, without precedent, in an atmosphere easily stressed with human emotion. We badly need the balanced judgment of the researcher, detached from our emotions, our wishful hoping, and our hopeful wishing, but not detached from our problems: What they realistically are, and what research can realistically produce in the way of solutions.²⁴

Scheier further stated that:

. . . we ought to be using research to improve the product rather than try to "hard-sell" it in its present unperfected form. . . . We need to understand far better just what sorts of relationships do occur between volunteers and probationers. . . . When we understand the relationship better we can surely use our volunteers not only more effectively, but more humanly . . . we need to learn a great deal more about the management of court volunteer programs. . . . Finally, court volunteer research needs to move from 'prove it' to 'improve it' orientations. . . . Therefore, my charge to this conference would be: Let there be a minimum of mystery in our

²³Arkansas Rehabilitation Research and Training Center, Institute On Research With Volunteers In Juvenile Delinquency, eds. Paul F. Zelhart and Jack M. Plummer (Fayetteville: May 13 and 14, 1970), preface.

²⁴Scheier, Institute On Research With Volunteers In Juvenile Delinquency, p. 7.

movement. This should leave enough magic to please anyone, but we depend too much on magic now.²⁵

Ivan Scheier was the primary mover behind the organization and planning of the Arkansas conference, and it is certain that he will continue to carry the message of the need for additional research on volunteer courts in the future.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 7-10.

Chapter 3

DESIGN OF THE STUDY, ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF DATA

This study is a descriptive investigation of the role and activities of the volunteer probation officer in the Ingham County Probate Court/Juvenile Division. A delineated analysis of the current function of the V.P.O. program is essential to the design of a more comprehensive examination of the effectiveness of the volunteer probation officer. Indeed, a valid description of the current operation of the volunteer probation officer program has implications for the improvement of that effort.

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The population for this study was defined as all individuals who served as volunteer probation officers in the Ingham County Probate Court/Juvenile Division during the period of January 1969 through June 1970. This time period corresponded to the first eighteen months of the program operation. Fifty-three individuals qualified for the population count under this definition. A table of random numbers was used to select a sample of twenty-seven persons from this number.

TYPES OF DATA

Data collected were of several types. Basic demographic data on the volunteer such as age, sex, educational status and marital status were gathered. Data concerning the nature and frequency of the volunteer-probationer relationship were also obtained. In addition, an effort was made to elicit information on the attitudes of the volunteer towards the V.P.O. program.

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The data for this study were gathered by three methods. First, the author acted as a personal observer of the V.P.O. program from the vantagepoint of his position as Director of the Office of Volunteer Programs at Michigan State University. Second, a semi-structured interview schedule was used to obtain the attitudes of the volunteers and to query their activities as volunteer probation officers. Third, the basic demographic data concerning the volunteers were obtained from records maintained by the Ingham County Probate Court.

The writer was able to use his position with the Office of Volunteer Programs to great advantage during the course of the study. As has already been noted, the author was the original contact person at Michigan State University when the court initiated a volunteer tutoring program in September 1968. Since that time he has been

involved in the planning and recruitment of volunteers for the various court volunteer programs. This situation has allowed the writer to view the V.P.O. program from a personal perspective and to be fully aware of the various developments of the Ingham County Probate Court's volunteer programs. In addition, the author has attended the regular court orientation-training program for all new volunteer probation officers.

In order to gather specific data a semi-structured interview schedule was developed and pretested. It was designed to elicit information on the volunteer and the nature of his relationship with his assigned probationer. Data on the frequency and type of contact were obtained through the interview schedule during personal interviews with nearly all members of the sample population. Each interview lasted approximately thirty minutes, and all individuals selected by the random sample were willing to participate in the study. The few members in the sample who were not contacted were no longer living in the State of Michigan. It may be surmised, therefore, that they had not left the program because of their dissatisfaction with it.

The collection of the basic demographic data on the volunteers was gathered from their applications for the volunteer probation officer program on file at the

Ingham County Probate Court offices. The gathering of this data was simply a matter of accurately transferring the data from the court files.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The objective of this study is to describe the role and activities of the volunteer probation officer (V.P.O.) in the Ingham County Probate Court/Juvenile Division. To accomplish this goal, the writer has attempted to investigate three basic issues pertinent to the volunteer probation officer program: First, what does the volunteer probation officer do? Second, what are the attitudes of the volunteer towards the V.P.O. program? And third, what is the profile of the average volunteer probation officer?

In attempting to analyze and place in perspective the gathered data relevant to the first two issues, it seems appropriate to begin with a discussion of the third, "what is the profile of the average volunteer probation officer"? An understanding of the identity of the average V.P.O. makes the data relating to the first two issues more meaningful.

During the period January 1969 through June 1970, fifty-three individuals served as volunteer probation officers in the Ingham County Probate Court. From this number, a random sample of twenty-seven persons was drawn

for this study. Of the twenty-seven people selected in the sample, successful interviews were completed with twenty-three individuals, twelve of whom were males, eleven, females. All participants cooperated quite willingly, and no one objected to the interview schedule that was administered. The writer personally interviewed all participants in the study, and each interview was tape-recorded to insure the accuracy of interview content. The writer was unable to contact four persons selected in the sample because they were no longer residing in the State of Michigan.

PROFILE OF THE AVERAGE VOLUNTEER

The data describing the volunteer probation officers were obtained from the records of the Ingham County Probate Court. Each V.P.O. was required to complete a regular application form when applying for the program, and these forms contained the necessary demographic data concerning the basic characteristics of the individuals assigned as volunteer probation officers. Data regarding occupation, age, marital status and education were gathered only for each individual actually interviewed by the author.

Occupation

Analysis of the data regarding the occupations of the volunteer probation officers indicates the acceptance

by the court of the college student volunteer. Of the twenty-three individuals interviewed, fifteen were current full-time college students. The college student input appears to be even greater in light of the additional fact that the four persons who were not successfully interviewed were graduated college students who had left Michigan. A breakdown of the occupation classifications is displayed in Table 1. The data are significant only in the college student category. The remaining categories do not show any other occupation as being heavily represented in the ranks of the volunteer probation officers. It is certainly obvious that with only eight non-college student volunteer probation officers in the group interviewed, it would be unlikely for another occupation to be designated frequently. The data clearly demonstrate, though, the nature of the Michigan State University input to the volunteer probation officer program of the Ingham County Probate Court.

Table 1
Occupations of Volunteer Probation Officers

	Male	Female
College Student	8	7
Pastor	2	0
Secretary	0	2
Public Relations	1	0
Salesman	1	0
Teacher	0	1
Housewife	0	1
Total	12	11

Age

The youngest volunteer probation officer was only nineteen years old despite the Ingham County Probate Court suggestion of twenty years of age as the minimum age qualification for acceptance as a volunteer probation officer. An exception appears to have been made in this case because the individual concerned was an employed secretary of the Court. All other V.P.O.'s were at least twenty years old, with the oldest individual having attained sixty-nine years of age. The average age for all volunteers was 28.86 years. Male volunteers tended to be slightly older than female volunteers. The average age of all male V.P.O.'s was 32.33 years as opposed to 25.09 years for all female volunteers. Moreover, a clear distinction in age was noticed between the college student volunteer and the non-college student volunteer. The average age of all college student V.P.O.'s was 23.60 years compared to an average age of 38.75 years for all non-college student V.P.O.'s. These figures are outlined in Table 2.

Marital Status

Of the twenty-three persons interviewed, thirteen were single, nine were married and one was divorced.

Table 2

Average Age of Volunteer Probation Officers

	Average Age	Number
All Volunteers	28.86	23
Male Volunteers	32.33	12
Female Volunteers	25.09	11
College Student Volunteers	23.60	15
Non-College Student Volunteers	38.75	8

There was a greater tendency for males to be married than females. The data are outlined below:

	SINGLE	MARRIED	DIVORCED
MALE	5	7	0
FEMALE	8	2	1

Education

All individuals in the sample completed a high school education. Only three of the twenty-three interviewees had not had some college experience. Fifteen of the volunteers were current college students, one of whom was a graduate student who already possessed a Bachelor's degree. The complete data on education of the volunteer probation officers are set forth in Table 3.

Who, then, is the average volunteer probation officer in the Ingham County Probate Court? The data clearly indicate that the average V.P.O. is likely to be a current Michigan State University student, either

Table 3
Education of Volunteer Probation Officers

	Male	Female
High School Only	1	2
Current College Student	8	7
College Degree	4*	2
Graduate Degree	1	0

* Includes one current graduate student and the person with a graduate degree.

male or female, approximately twenty-three years of age. If the individual is female, she will probably be unmarried; if male, he would be as likely to be married as unmarried.

An interview schedule which contained twenty-eight open-end and fixed-response questions was designed by the writer to gather data of both an exploratory and descriptive nature. This was essential in order to provide clarity and continuity to the flow of questions asked in the interview situation. Hence, several of the questions have elicited data of a non-quantifiable nature. This data will be useful, though, in the overall description of the volunteer probation officer program, and an interpretive analysis of the exploratory data will be integrated into the discussion of the analysis and implications of the data.

BACKGROUND AND TRAINING OF VOLUNTEERS

The questions in the schedule can be grouped according to the data sought. Questions three, four, five, twenty-two and twenty-three gathered data on the previous volunteer experience of the V.P.O., on the training and preparation of the volunteer and on the initial contact of the volunteer with the child to whom he was assigned. Sixteen of the twenty-three persons interviewed indicated that they had had previous volunteer experiences. The experiences that were enumerated covered several areas of volunteer service, and no one type of volunteer experience was predominant. The responses did indicate, however, that the volunteer probation officers as a group did have a varied and wide-ranging volunteer background.

Looking specifically at the volunteer probation officer program, one would note the following information as important. The Ingham County Court requires all volunteer probation officers to participate in a two-session orientation-training program which outlines the role of the V.P.O. The data indicate, however, that only eleven of the twenty-three individuals interviewed had participated in the complete, two-session, court orientation-training program. Three persons responded that they had participated in one of the two evening sessions while

nine persons admitted that they had not received orientation-training prior to being assigned as a volunteer probation officer. These data are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4
Participation of V.P.O.'s in Orientation-
Training Program

	Volunteers
Completed two-session training	11
Completed one-half of two-session training	3
Did not complete training	9
Total	23

Further, only ten individuals indicated that they had been formally "sworn-in" by a judge of the court as official representatives of the Ingham County Probate Court. In addition, only the same ten individuals received identification cards verifying their status as volunteer probation officers for Ingham County. Nineteen respondents reported that they had been introduced to their assigned probationer by a member of the court staff, while five had to make the initial contact on their own.¹ This is significant due to the critical nature of the initial contact. These data are set forth in Tables 5, 6, and 7.

¹Data concerning several of the questions indicate twenty-four respondents rather than twenty-three. This is due to one V.P.O. who worked with two children.

Table 5

Number of Volunteers that Were Formally "Sworn-in"
as Representatives of the Court

	Volunteers
Sworn-in	10
Not sworn-in	13
Total	23

Table 6

Number of Volunteers that Were Issued Identif-
ication as Representatives of the Court

	Volunteers
Issued Identification	10
Not-issued Identification	13
Total	23

Table 7

V.P.O.'s Introduction to Assigned Child
Made by a Court Caseworker

	Volunteers
Introduction by the caseworker	19
No introduction by the caseworker	5
Total	24

ROLE AND ACTIVITIES OF THE VOLUNTEER
PROBATION OFFICER

Data specifically geared to the role and activities of the volunteer probation officer were gathered by questions two, six through fifteen, eighteen, nineteen and twenty-one. Only seven of the persons interviewed were currently serving as V.P.O.'s with the Court. Sixteen individuals had terminated their volunteer activity prior to the interview. The average length of service for the individuals who had terminated their service had been 5.8 months. The terminated volunteers indicated five reasons why they were no longer active, and their specific responses are set forth in Table 8. The respondents who were current volunteer probation officers had each already served an average of 5.66 months.

Table 8

Reasons for the Termination of
Volunteer Service

	Number
Child released from jurisdiction	6
Runaway	1
Volunteer no longer residing in Lansing Community	7
Child no longer residing in Lansing Community	1
No time to serve	2
Total	17*

* One individual worked with two children.

Twelve volunteers reported that the atmosphere of the first private contact with their assigned child was friendly. Four indicated that tension was evident at the beginning of the meeting, but was dissipated by the end of the session. Seven individuals responded that the first private contact was "very tense." All respondents indicated that their initial private contact with their assigned probationer lasted longer than one-half hour. Five said that the first private contact was for a period of one-half hour to one hour. Eleven indicated that they had met for a period of between one and two hours, while eight said that their first private meeting with their child lasted more than two hours. These data are indicated in Tables 9 and 10.

The follow-up question to those eliciting the above data attempted to determine the activity participated in most frequently during the first private contact period between the volunteer and the ward of the court. A breakdown of the responses indicates that several different activities were carried out by the V.P.O.'s and their charges. The context of the responses indicates quite clearly, though, that the first private meeting was devoted to getting to know the child to whom one was assigned and vice versa. Nine of the interviewees indicated that they just "talked" during the first session with their child. In all cases, the activity participated

Table 9

Atmosphere of First Private Contact Between
Volunteer and Child

	Volunteers
Friendly	12
Initial tension	4
Very tense	7
Total	23

Table 10

Length of Time Spent During the Initial Private
Contact Between Volunteer and Child

	Volunteers
Less than one-half hour	0
One-half hour to one hour	5
One hour to two hours	11
More than two hours	8
Total	24

in, as varied as it was from volunteer to volunteer, was used as a method to establish a relationship with the child.

The data suggest that volunteers are quite enthusiastic early in their assignment, and that during this time there is a high frequency of V.P.O.-probationer contact. Eighteen individuals reported that they met with their probationer at least once a week or more frequently during the first three months of service. Four of these individuals indicate, however, that they

did not maintain this degree of frequency beyond three months. These data are displayed in Tables 11 and 12.

A question was included in the interview schedule to elicit data concerning the most frequent meeting place of the volunteer and the probationer. The responses were varied, and they indicated that there was no important pattern in the usual meeting places. It appears that the contacts were almost always initiated at the child's place of residence, and activities were decided on at that time. Frequently, the V.P.O. would bring the child to his home; many, being M.S.U. students, brought their child to the M.S.U. campus.

Perhaps more important is the data gathered in answer to a fixed-response question used as a follow-up to the question eliciting the preceding data. The question read: "What activity did you and your probationer participate in most frequently"? The fixed responses were: "recreation, discussion, entertainment, or other, please specify." Ten of the respondents chose to designate more than a single response, with one of the responses always being "discussion." In fact, only three of the interviewees did not choose discussion as one of their responses to the question. In other words, twenty individuals designated discussion as the activity most frequently participated in. Table 13 sets forth these data.

Table 11

Frequency of Contact Between V.P.O. and Child
During First Three Months of Contact

	Volunteers
More than once a week	8
Once a week	10
Once every two weeks	5
Once a month	0
Not applicable	1*
Total	24

* Volunteer left Lansing for the summer shortly after having been assigned. She resumed contact when she returned to Lansing.

Table 12

Frequency of Contact Between V.P.O. and Child
After the First Three Month Period

	Volunteers
More than once a week	4
Once a week	5
Once every two weeks	4
Once a month	3
Not applicable	8*
Total	24

* Volunteers were still in the first three months of service.

Table 13

Activity Participated in Most Frequently
by the Volunteer and the Child

	Volunteers
Recreation	12
Discussion	20
Entertainment	2
Other	0
More than one response	10

Sixteen of the twenty-three interviewees indicated that they had made use of the resources of the court and its staff in some way while working with their probationer. Most respondents stated that their primary employment of court resources was in the use of official records and court files in order to obtain background information on their probationer. The follow-up question asked for specific data on the frequency of contact between the volunteer probation officer and the court-employed caseworker. The data confirm a high degree of contact between these two individuals. Twelve of the interviewees stated that they had had between two and five telephone or personal contacts with the court-employed caseworker assigned to the V.P.O.'s probationer. Moreover, ten respondents indicated that they had had more than five contacts with the court caseworker. In addition, fifteen persons reported that they submitted a written report to the caseworker after each contact

with their probationer as required by the guidelines of the court. Tables 14, 15 and 16 display these data.

Perhaps the most significant data regarding the activities of the volunteer probation officers concern the use by the V.P.O. of other community agencies while working with his probationer. Twelve V.P.O.'s indicated that they had used the resources of some other agency or institution. The other twelve respondents stated that they had not used other community agencies in any way. Surprisingly, only three persons reported that they had contacted personnel at the school attended by the child. Volunteers as a group, then, seemed to be basically unaware of the types of resources or services available for their probationer. These data are displayed in Table 17.

Seventeen of the V.P.O.'s reported that they had met the family of their probationer, while seven indicated that they had not. Four of the seven reported that their probationer was not living with his natural parents, and that this precluded contact with them. Of the seventeen volunteers who had met the parents of their assigned child, thirteen reported that the parents accepted the volunteer probation officer idea. Two interviewees reported that the parents rejected the V.P.O., and two responded that the parents were indifferent to the V.P.O. concept. These data, which are outlined in Tables 18 and 19, were sought

Table 14

Use of Court Resources by Volunteer

	Volunteers
Did make use	16
Did not make use	7
Total	23

Table 15

V.P.O. Contact with Court-Employed
Caseworker

	Volunteers
One contact	0
Two to five contacts	12
More than five contacts	10
No contacts	2
Total	24

Table 16

Submission of a Written Report to the
Caseworker After Each Contact
With Child

	Volunteers
Yes	15
No	9
Total	24

Table 17

Volunteer Utilization of the Resources
of Other Community Agencies

	Volunteers
Yes	12
No	12
Total	24

Table 18

Did the Volunteer Become Acquainted with
the Family of the Child?

	Volunteers
Yes	17
No	7*
Total	24

* Four volunteers reported that their assigned child was not living with natural parents for various reasons.

Table 19

Attitudes of Parents Towards
V.P.O. Program

	Number
Accepted	13
Rejected	2
Indifferent	2
Total	17

because of the court's clear desire to have the volunteer probation officer function in conjunction with the family of the probationer.

ATTITUDES OF THE VOLUNTEER PROBATION OFFICER

The last grouping of questions was designed to gather data on the attitude of the volunteer towards the volunteer probation officer program. Questions sixteen, seventeen, twenty, and twenty-four through twenty-eight were written for this purpose. The questions began with a query concerning the caseworker's support of the volunteer probation officer program. Twenty-two persons felt that the caseworker assigned to their probationer was supportive of the V.P.O. program, while two respondents indicated the contrary. However, in the follow-up question only eighteen individuals were satisfied with the court caseworker--volunteer probation officer relationship. Six respondents clearly stated that they were not satisfied with their relationship to the court caseworker. Even some of the respondents who stated that they were satisfied with the relationship, indicated that there was still room for improvement. These data are displayed in Tables 20 and 21.

The data indicate that there is not a clear consensus among the volunteers as to the role that they are expected to play with their probationer. Table 22

Table 20

Court Caseworker Support of
V.P.O. Program

	Number
Did support	22
Did not support	2
Total	24

Table 21

Volunteer Satisfaction with V.P.O.--
Caseworker Relationship

	Volunteers
Satisfied	18
Not satisfied	6
Total	24

Table 22

Volunteer as Authoritative Figure

	Volunteers
Yes	12
No	12
Total	24

indicates that twelve respondents stated that as volunteer probation officers they did represent authority to their probationer, while twelve persons indicated that they did not do so.

All twenty-three interviewees stated clearly that they thought that the volunteer probation officer program had been a worthwhile experience for them, and that they were pleased that they had had the opportunity to participate in the program. Six persons mentioned that the experience would be beneficial to their future career plans. In fact, the writer has learned that one of the interviewees is now employed as a caseworker at the Ingham County Probate Court.

In attempting to elicit data on the V.P.O.'s results with his child, the writer asked an open-ended question, and then coded the responses positive, negative or neutral. Only thirteen of the twenty-three respondents felt that they had produced positive results in their work with their probationer. Four indicated that they were not successful in their efforts to help the child in their charge, and seven persons made statements of a neutral nature which, in most cases, indicate a lack of success in dealing with the problems facing their probationer. Table 23 sets forth these data.

A question was asked as to the idea of incarceration or a fine as an alternative to a child's assignment

Table 23
Volunteers' Perception of Results

	Volunteers
Positive	13
Negative	4
Neutral	7
Total	24

to a volunteer probation officer. All respondents were opposed to either of the suggested alternatives to the V.P.O. program, and from this standpoint indicated their belief in their efforts.

An open-ended question was posed to determine what influence the V.P.O. program had on the participant's conception of the criminal justice system. The responses, which are displayed in Table 24, were categorized as positive, negative or no change. Eleven of the individuals made statements that they had been influenced positively towards the criminal justice system. As an example, one interviewee stated that her experience "reinforced her beliefs that more time, money and personnel are needed in order to rehabilitate rather than punish." Six persons, on the other hand, indicated negative responses to the system of criminal justice because of their experience as a V.P.O. One individual proclaimed bluntly: "It is not effective," and another said: "The system is arbitrary."

Table 24

Influence of V.P.O. Service on Volunteers'
Conception of Criminal Justice System

	Volunteers
Positive	11
Negative	6
No change	6
Total	23

The final question in the interview schedule asked for specific suggestions for the improvement of the orientation and training of volunteer probation officers. Eighteen persons made specific recommendations. Several individuals called for regularly scheduled meetings of all V.P.O.'s in order to exchange ideas and seek self-assurance from their peers. The fact that many of the respondents were able to make suggestions for improvements in the orientation-training of V.P.O.'s indicates the need for a redesign and improvement of the current orientation-training program.

IMPLICATIONS OF DATA

Four important observations can be made from the analysis of the data. First, there appears to be a lack of court preparation of the volunteer probation officer. Second, the interviewed V.P.O.'s seemed to experience a sense of conflict as to their role as either an

authoritative or non-authoritative representative of the court. Third, although there is obviously a large input of college student volunteers into the V.P.O. program, almost half of them had to resign from the program prior to the end of their assignment. And lastly, data indicate that many volunteers began to lose enthusiasm after the initial three months of service. This fourth observation suggests the need for regularly-scheduled meetings of all or several current volunteer probation officers to engender mutual confidence and commitment.

The data clearly illustrate that the court did not adequately prepare the assigned volunteers during the first eighteen months of the volunteer probation officer program. Nine interviewees stated that they had not had any training prior to their assignment as a V.P.O. Perhaps, though, a more significant fact is that thirteen persons had not been "sworn-in" and given formal status as representatives of the Ingham County Probate Court. These same individuals were not provided with an identification card verifying their assignment by the court as a volunteer. Despite its failure to properly identify and train volunteers, however, the court demonstrated a good record in arranging a meeting of the volunteer, the probationer and the caseworker at the outset of the volunteer experience. Only five of the individuals interviewed

indicated that they had made the initial contact with their assigned probationer without the assistance of the court-assigned caseworker.

An undated, mimeographed handout entitled "Volunteer Program Descriptions And Sample Forms" distributed by the Ingham County Probate Court states clearly that "The Volunteer Probation Officer is to represent authority . . ." However, the interviewees were divided on their conception of themselves as authoritative individuals. Twelve persons felt that as volunteer probation officers they did represent authority, and yet twelve respondents felt that they did not. These data indicate that the court had not clearly defined the role of the volunteer probation officer to the individuals selected for this study.

Another important observation apparent from the analysis of the data is the seeming difficulty Michigan State University students experience in serving the duration of their assignment. Yet the data collected do indicate that the M.S.U. students are functioning within the court's expectations as outlined in an undated handout of the Ingham County Probate Court entitled "Volunteer Probation Officer Program." The handout lists the following requirement of applicants for the V.P.O. program: "Able to remain active in the program for a minimum of six months, with a maximum probably not over

a year." Since the terminated V.P.O.'s had each served an average of 5.8 months, they fell short of fulfilling court expectations for minimal service by only .2 of a month. And reasons for termination were not generally superficial; rather graduation or summer vacation necessarily ended service. It is important to note, however, that the staff of the Office of Volunteer Programs at Michigan State University is making an attempt to avoid this kind of occurrence in the future. By being more selective in its choice of students for referral to the court program, the staff hopes to refer only those students whose graduation or summer vacation will not have to interrupt their service.

Finally, the responses to questions asked in four different areas indicate that the volunteer may be in need of additional assistance or support while on assignment. The data demonstrate that volunteers begin to lose their enthusiasm after the first three months as a V.P.O. The frequency of their contacts with their probationer decreases after this initial period. In addition, the volunteers evinced a real lack of knowledge concerning the totality of community resources available to the V.P.O. as a representative of the court or even, simply, as a resident of the community. The data gathered in the quest of information regarding the attitudes of the volunteer are also significant. Only thirteen V.P.O.'s

felt the results of their efforts had been positive. Also, only eleven of the respondents stated that their V.P.O. experience had influenced them positively towards the criminal justice system.

There are certain methods that could be utilized to provide greater support and encouragement to the volunteer probation officer while on assignment. First, more specific information concerning available community resources can easily be compiled and provided to the V.P.O.'s. The data demonstrate that only three volunteers made an effort to seek the assistance of the local school representatives while working with their child, while only one respondent indicated that he had contacted an employment agency in an effort to help his child find part-time employment. Specific suggestions by the court at the time of the orientation-training meetings or during an in-service training session would help volunteers to utilize better the resources of the various community agencies.

In answer to the last question on the schedule, the respondents made specific suggestions for the improvement of orientation-training. Several of their ideas voice practical methods of maintaining the enthusiasm of the volunteers, while also providing support to the V.P.O. Some respondents recommended that new volunteers be initially assigned to work in conjunction with a current

volunteer probation officer in order for the new recruit to gain an insight into the nature of the task. Several volunteers called for frequent, regularly-scheduled meetings of all volunteer probation officers. Others said that they needed more details and better guidelines. Although the data indicate frequent contact between the volunteer and the court-employed caseworker, the volunteers often made comments suggestive of the need for additional contact with and support from the assigned caseworker.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It seems clear, then, that additional support from the court is essential to maintain the volunteer's enthusiasm, and to provide him with greater insights into the nature of his volunteer experience. The court can play a vital role in providing the volunteer with the support necessary to give him a sense of adequacy in the performance of his V.P.O. duties. The following recommendations would aid the court in carrying-out that role:

1. The court should re-evaluate its definition and conception of the volunteer probation officer, and communicate a clear description of the role expectation to all applicants for volunteer probation officer assignments.

2. The court should adopt a uniform policy regarding the requirement of being "officially sworn-in" as a volunteer probation officer.
3. The court should provide adequate identification to all persons appointed as volunteer probation officers for Ingham County.
4. The court should institute and require volunteer probation officer participation in regularly-scheduled meetings. Frequent meetings of all volunteer probation officers could serve as a vehicle for in-service training, for the exchange of ideas among volunteer probation officers and for the solicitation of meaningful feedback from the volunteers.
5. The court should prepare a comprehensive list of guidelines for volunteer probation officers. These should include a discussion of community resources available to the volunteer while working with his probationer.

Chapter 4

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In 1961, in Royal Oak, Michigan, the citizen volunteer returned to the court in an effort to assist in the rehabilitation of the criminal offender. The return of the volunteer was exciting since the whole concept of probationary service as a rehabilitative measure began with a volunteer, John Augustus of Boston, in 1841. As probationary services developed as a professional rehabilitative treatment approach to the problems of the criminal offender in our society, the role of the volunteer citizen had been diminished. In their attempt to achieve the status of a professional, the paid probation officers had closed the doors on the volunteer. However, since 1961 the doors have been opened wide, and the volunteer courts movement has produced a significant manpower pool to assist the overworked and understaffed probation departments of most of our country's lower courts.

The volunteer courts movement has progressed, as many movements have, without adequate examination, organization or administration to insure its proper growth and

development. The last ten years have demonstrated that many members of our society want to be and are a part of this movement. However, in the course of its growth and development, the movement has suffered from lack of planning as these citizens volunteer in ever-increasing numbers. Gary Auslander has reported results confirming these facts:

The overall general response to the survey seems to indicate that the volunteer courts movement, if it can be called such, may not be as wide-spread and sophisticated as previously thought. Many of the courts seem to be quite underdeveloped as to the number of volunteers, amount of available funds, sufficiency of training materials, and the overall effort and time that is put into training volunteers. The implications of this may be that most of the volunteer courts are beginning volunteer programs without well thought out plans and are therefore in desperate need of information and any training materials that could be made available from more sophisticated court programs.¹

In September 1968 Ingham County Probate Court joined the ranks of the volunteer courts movement when Michigan State University students were recruited by the Office of Volunteer Programs to serve as volunteer tutors. A lack of planning and organization soon led to the cancellation of an effort in this particular direction. However, the court has maintained its original enthusiasm for the volunteer concept, and today, Ingham County Probate Court operates three volunteer programs, the largest

¹Gary Auslander, "The Volunteer In The Court" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Illinois, 1969), p. 57.

being the volunteer probation officer program. Because the V.P.O. program utilizes the largest amount of volunteer manpower of the three programs, and because it has the greatest potential for involving interested community citizens, the writer chose to gather data about its current operation and organization.

The research effort reported in the preceding pages of this thesis has several drawbacks and imperfections. However, it is a beginning of a much-needed extensive examination of the use of volunteers in the Ingham County Court. The sample of the population comprised only a total of twenty-seven persons, and the writer was successful in interviewing only twenty-three of these. The interview schedule collected some data that were not of a quantifiable nature. Yet significant conclusions have been drawn from the analysis and interpretation of the data gleaned from these interviews; also, specific recommendations have been made for the improvement of the volunteer probation officer program.

The data gathered here indicate a need for an additional, in-depth study of the use of volunteers in the court. For continued growth and development, information on the attitudes of the probationer will be essential since the probationer is the direct recipient of the V.P.O.'s services. Also, an investigation of the attitudes of the court-employed caseworkers should be

conducted because several of the respondents in this study indicated their concern for the lack of support from their cooperating caseworker. Continued research on the orientation and training of volunteers will be necessary in the future.

. . . training is crucial for the growth of the individual volunteer and for enhancing his self-confidence. In addition to giving him a better understanding of the behavior of his client, training should also focus upon an attempt to alleviate some of the volunteer's own anxieties.²

This study, hopefully, will contribute to the improvement and understanding of the volunteer probation officer program, and will lay the groundwork for future examinations of the volunteer concept existent in the Ingham County Probate Court.

²Joseph D. Bagan and others, "Volunteer Probation Counselors In The Denver County Court" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Denver, 1968), pp. 24-5.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

**INGHAM COUNTY JUVENILE COURT
VOLUNTEER PROBATION
OFFICER STUDY**

Ingham County Juvenile Court
Volunteer Probation Officer Study

Interview Schedule
September, 1970

Interview # _____

Conducted by:

John H. Cauley, Jr.
Director
Office of Volunteer Programs
Michigan State University
26 Student Services Bldg.
East Lansing 48823
(517) 353-4400

1. How did you become aware of the Ingham County volunteer probation officer program?

2. Are you still active as a volunteer probation officer?

yes _____ no _____

If yes, how many months have you served as a volunteer probation officer? _____

If no, how many months did you serve as a volunteer probation officer? _____

If no, can you state why you are no longer active in the program?

3. Prior to becoming a volunteer probation officer had you had any other volunteer experience?

yes _____ no _____

If yes, please indicate prior experience: _____

4. Did you participate in an orientation and training session that outlined your role as a volunteer probation officer?

yes _____ no _____

5. (A) Were you introduced to your probationer by a member of the court staff?

yes _____ no _____

- (B) If not, was there a reason why you were not introduced to your probationer by a court staff member?

6. How would you describe briefly the atmosphere of the first private contact between you and your probationer? _____

7. How long did you meet during this first contact?

_____ less than one-half hour
 _____ one-half hour to one hour
 _____ one hour to two hours
 _____ more than two hours

8. What specifically did you and your probationer do during your first meeting together? _____

1. The first part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the city of New York.

2.

3.

4. The second part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the city of New York.

5. The third part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the city of New York.

6.

7. The fourth part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the city of New York.

8. The fifth part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the city of New York.

9.

10. The sixth part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the city of New York.

11.

12.

13.

14.

15. The seventh part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the city of New York.

16. The eighth part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the city of New York.

17.

18.

19.

20.

21. The ninth part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the city of New York.

22. The tenth part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the city of New York.

23.

24. The eleventh part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the city of New York.

25.

26. The twelfth part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the city of New York.

27.

28. The thirteenth part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the city of New York.

29.

30. The fourteenth part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the city of New York.

9. Did this first contact in any way set the tone for future contacts?

yes _____ no _____

10. How often did you meet with your probationer during the first three months of your assignment?

_____ more than once a week
_____ once a week
_____ once every two weeks
_____ once a month

11. How often did you meet with your probationer during the period after the first three months?

_____ more than once a week
_____ once a week
_____ once every two weeks
_____ once a month

12. Where did you meet most frequently with your probationer?

13. What activity did you and your probationer participate in most frequently?

_____ recreation _____ entertainment
 _____ discussion _____ other, please specify

14. (A) Did you use the resources of the court and its staff in any way while working with your probationer?

yes _____ no _____

(B) If yes, explain: _____

(C) Were the resources of the Court _____ adequate _____ inadequate

(D) If inadequate, explain: _____

(E) If not, why not?

15. (A) How many times have you had telephone or personal contact with the court-employed caseworker assigned to your probationer?

_____ one time
 _____ two to five times
 _____ more than five times
 _____ never

- (B) If never, have you ever attempted to initiate contact with the caseworker and not been successful in doing so?

yes _____ no _____

- (C) If yes, how many times? _____

16. Is the assigned caseworker supportive of the Volunteer Probation Officer Program?

yes _____ no _____

17. (A) Are you satisfied with the caseworker-volunteer probation officer relationship?

yes _____ no _____

- (B) If not, why not?

18. (A) Have you submitted a written report to the caseworker after each contact with your probationer?

yes _____ no _____

- (B) If not, why not?

19. (A) Were you able to utilize the resources of any other community agencies in any way while working with your probationer?

yes _____ no _____

- (B) If yes, which agencies and what resources?:

- (1) _____

 (2) _____

 (3) _____

 (4) _____

 (5) _____

- (C) Were the services of these agencies

(1)	_____	adequate	_____	inadequate
(2)	_____	adequate	_____	inadequate
(3)	_____	adequate	_____	inadequate
(4)	_____	adequate	_____	inadequate
(5)	_____	adequate	_____	inadequate

20. As a volunteer probation officer, did you represent authority to your probationer?

yes _____ no _____

explain: _____

21. (A) Have you had the opportunity to become acquainted with the family of your probationer?

yes _____ no _____

- (B) If yes, do you feel that the family accepted, rejected or was indifferent to your relationship with your probationer?

_____ accepted _____ rejected _____ indifferent

explain: _____

22. Were you "sworn-in" as a volunteer probation officer by a judge of the Ingham County Juvenile Court?

yes _____ no _____

23. Did you receive from the Court identification that verified your status as a volunteer probation officer?

yes _____ no _____

24. Do you feel that the Ingham County volunteer probation officer program was a worthwhile experience for you?

yes _____ no _____

explain: _____

25. What sort of results do you feel you had with your probationer?

26. Based on your experience, do you feel that a fine or a jail sentence would have been a more effective deterrent for your probationer?

yes _____ no _____

explain: _____

27. How has your participation as a volunteer probation officer influenced your conception of the criminal justice system?

explain: _____

28. Based on your experiences, can you suggest specific ways that the orientation and training of volunteer probation officers can be improved?

APPENDIX B

**INGHAM COUNTY PROBATE COURT
VOLUNTEER PROBATION OFFICER
APPLICATION FORM**

APPENDIX B

INGHAM COUNTY PROBATE COURT
VOLUNTEER PROBATION OFFICER
APPLICATION FORM

Date _____

Name _____ Address _____

Home Phone _____ Bus. Phone _____ Birthdate _____

Sex _____ Marital Status (circle one) Single, Married,

Widowed, Divorced; Children, and their ages: _____

Education Location Date of Grad.

Elementary _____

High School _____

College _____

Other _____

Major areas of training: _____

Present occupation: _____ How long have you

been in this occupation? _____

Spouse's name and occupation: _____

What hobbies/recreational activities do you enjoy most?

What previous experience have you had working with young people? _____

How much time per week could you spend as a VPO?

(Average) _____

We would be interested in your ideas/views on Juvenile Delinquency. The Court is interested in trying as many approaches to delinquency as seem reasonable. Please state your views frankly. (Use back)

Do you have a car with public liability insurance coverage that you would be willing to use in your volunteer work?

Yes _____ No _____

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