

The Daily Freeman (<http://www.dailyfreeman.com>)

Go Back

Print Page

Study: Volunteerism in Ulster County surpasses state, national rates

County rates among those involved with good causes surpasses state and national numbers, survey finds

By Patricia R. Doxsey, Daily Freeman

Sunday, February 19, 2017



KINGSTON, N.Y. >> At a time when volunteerism is declining nationwide, Ulster County residents are stepping up — with both the number of people volunteering and the amount of time they are devoting to volunteer endeavors surpassing both the state and national rates, according to a recently published report by The Benjamin Center for Public Policy Initiatives.

Lacking among the pool of volunteers, however, the study found are those who speak Spanish.

[The study, prepared at the behest of UlsterCorps](#), looked at the “who-what-when-where-why” of volunteerism in the county as well as what can be achieved in the county through volunteers.

In a 2010 survey using the same questions as a U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics poll, the Center found that 66,000 county residents — 45 percent of the county’s residents — had indicated they volunteered at least once in the past year.

That number was nearly double the state rate and almost 20 points higher than the national rate.

Of those volunteering, the Center found, women were more likely to volunteer than men; college educated adults were more likely to volunteer than those who don’t have a college degree; those with children are more likely to volunteer than childless adults; and the employed more likely to volunteer than the unemployed.

In every category, according to the report, Ulster County in 2010 far exceeded the national average reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2015.

Similarly, the percentage of volunteers in Ulster County who said they donated their time to more than one organization far exceeded their counterparts nationwide, with 72 percent of volunteers nationwide saying they only volunteered with one organization while 97 percent of Ulster County’s volunteers said they devoted their time to more than one, the report stated.

According to the report, the majority of those volunteering in Ulster County, gave their time to religious organizations or social and community service organizations, followed closely by educational, youth, sports, hobby, cultural, or arts organization.

“It’s human nature to give,” said Stacy Rein, the executive director of the Ulster County United Way, who was interviewed as part of the study.

“We’ll never be at a loss for volunteers,” she said, adding that most of their volunteers are people who “want to give back.”

The study found that while volunteers seem abundant in some areas, they are sorely lacking in others, and particularly in the emergency response and services area.

“The most urgent cries of distress are coming from fire departments and rescue squads,” the report stated.

Part of the problem in Ulster County, according to Scott Schulte an Ulster County fire investigator who was interviewed as part of the study, is that the area is attracting more and more weekend and seasonal residents “who may not have deep routes in the county.”

That, combined with the rigorous training requirements placed on volunteers, is resulting, according to the report, in communities moving away from volunteer fire and rescue squads in favor of paid services.

The study also found that with 12 percent of the county population speaking a language other than English and with Spanish the predominate foreign language, there is “a clear-cut need” for more Spanish speaking volunteers.

[Go Back](#)[Print Page](#)

URL: <http://www.dailyfreeman.com/general-news/20170219/study-volunteerism-in-ulster-county-surpasses-state-national-rates>

© 2017 The Daily Freeman (<http://www.dailyfreeman.com>)